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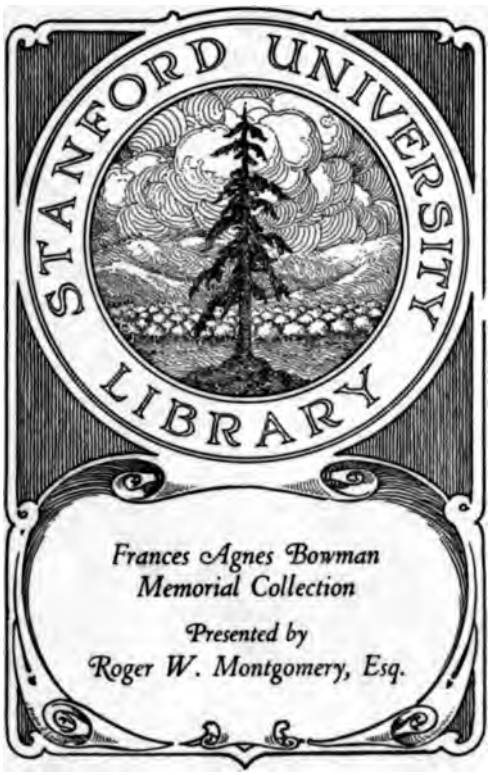
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DEDICATION[1]

TO

ISAAC P. DAVIS, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR:

A WARM private friendship has subsisted between us for half our lives, interrupted by no untoward occurrence, and never for a moment cooling into indifference. Of this friendship, the source of so much happiness to me, I wish to leave, if not an enduring memorial, at least an affectionate and grateful acknowledgment.

I inscribe this volume of my Speeches to you.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

[1] Volume II, Edition of 1851.

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Mass Meeting at Saratoga

Mass Meeting at Saratoga

cery were in session at Saratoga, and the Governor of the State was also in the village.

At half past three o'clock, the public meeting was called to order, and the Hon. John W. Taylor, of Ballston, formerly Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, was called to the chair. Other persons of eminence were near him. At this moment, in casting the eye from the platform (which had been hastily, and, as the event proved, not very securely, put together), the spectacle which presented itself was of a novel and most striking character. In front, in a fine grove of pines, without any undergrowth, covering a circular eminence, about eight or ten thousand persons were collected. Near the platform were seats of rough boards capable of containing as many more. These seats were partly filled by ladies. The upturned faces of this great assemblage, as Mr. Webster, personally a stranger to most of them, stepped to the front of the stage, evinced the most intense and eager expectation. Beyond and wholly round to the rear of the platform stood thousands closely pressed together. The appearance of the speaker was the signal for the most enthusiastic cheering on the part of this vast multitude.

As soon as silence was restored, he commenced the following speech, which for more than three hours held the immense crowd in attention the most fixed and profound, except as it was interrupted by constantly repeated cheers. Before he had spoken many moments, an incident occurred, which at the time threatened disaster, but happily had no serious result. As it furnishes a happy instance of self-possession, it is worth recording.

The platform, which was of rough boards elevated some seven or eight feet from the ground, on which the speaker, the chairman, and the official and distinguished persons present were seated, suddenly gave way and fell with a great crash. Mr. Webster, who was happily uninjured, was the first person on his feet; and, supporting himself on some fragments of the staging, announced to the anxious assembly that no one was hurt, adding the expression of his confidence and satisfaction, that "the great Whig platform was more solid than the frail structure on which he was standing." This annunciation relieved the apprehensions of the audience. The place of the shattered platform was supplied by a large wagon covered with planks, and from this extemporized rostrum Mr. Webster continued his address, without having been in the slightest degree disturbed in his tone of remark by the annoying incident.

Mass Meeting at Saratoga*

We are, my friends, in the midst of a great movement of the people. That a revolution in public sentiment on some important questions of public policy has begun, and is in progress, it is vain to attempt to conceal, and folly to deny. What will be the extent of this revolution, what its immediate effects upon political men and political measures, what ultimate influence it may have on the integrity of the Constitution, and the permanent prosperity of the country, remains to be seen. Meantime, no one can deny that an extraordinary excitement exists in the country, such as has not been witnessed for more than half a century; not local, nor confined to any two, or three, or ten States, but pervading the whole, from north to south, and from east to west, with equal force and intensity. For an effect so general, a cause of equal extent must exist. No cause, local or partial, can produce consequences so general and universal. In some parts of the country, indeed, local causes may in some degree add to the flame; but no local cause, nor any number of local causes, can account for the generally excited state of the public mind.

In portions of the country devoted to agriculture and manufactures, we hear complaints of want of market and low prices. Yet there are other portions of the country, which are consumers, and not producers, of food and manufactures; and, as purchasers, they should, it would seem, be satisfied with the low prices of which the sellers complain; but in these portions, too, of the country, there are dissatisfaction and discontent. Everywhere we find complaining and a desire for change.

* Speech delivered at the Great Mass Meeting at Saratoga, New York, on the 19th of August, 1840.

There are those who think that this excitement among the people will prove transitory and evanescent. I am not of that opinion. So far as I can judge, attention to public affairs among the people of the United States has increased, is increasing, and is not likely to be diminished; and this not in one part of the country, but all over it. This certainly is the fact, if we may judge from recent information. The breeze of popular excitement is blowing everywhere. It fans the air in Alabama and the Carolinas; and I am of opinion, that, when it shall cross the Potomac, and range along the Northern Alleghanies, it will grow stronger and stronger, until, mingling with the gales of the Empire State, and the mountain blasts of New England, it will blow a perfect hurricane.

There are those, again, who think these vast popular meetings are got up by effort; but I say that no effort could get them up, and no effort can keep them down. There must, then, be some general cause that animates the whole country. What is that cause? It is upon this point I propose to give my opinion today. I have no design to offend the feelings of any, but I mean in perfect plainness to express my views to the vast multitude assembled around. I know there are among them many who from first to last supported General Jackson. I know there are many who, if conscience and patriotism permitted, would support his successor;* and I should ill repay the attention with which they may honor me by any reviling or denunciation. Again, I come to play no part of oratory before you. If there have been times and occasions in my life when I might be supposed anxious to exhibit myself in such a light, that period has passed, and this is not one of the occasions. I come to dictate and prescribe to no man. If my experience, not now short, in the affairs of government, entitle my opinions to any respect, those opinions are at the service of my fellow-citizens. What I shall state as facts, I hold myself and my character responsible for; what I shall state as opinions, all are alike at liberty to reject or to receive. I ask such consideration for them only as the fairness and sincerity with which they are uttered may claim.

What, then, has excited the whole land, from Maine to Georgia, and gives us assurance, that, while we are meeting here

* Mr. Van Buren.

in New York in such vast numbers, other like meetings are holding throughout all the States? That this cause must be general is certain, for it agitates the whole country, and not parts only.

When that fluid in the human system indispensable to life becomes disordered, corrupted, or obstructed in its circulation, not the head or the heart alone suffers; but the whole body — head, heart, and hand, all the members, and all the extremities — is affected with debility, paralysis, numbness, and death. The analogy between the human system and the social and political system is complete; and what the lifeblood is to the former, circulation, money, currency, is to the latter; and if that be disordered or corrupted, paralysis must fall on the system.

The original, leading, main cause, then, of all our difficulties and disasters, is the disordered state of the circulation. This is, perhaps, not a perfectly obvious truth; and yet it is one susceptible of easy demonstration. In order to explain this the more readily, I wish to bring your minds to the consideration of the internal condition, and the vast domestic trade, of the United States. Our country is not a small province or canton, but an empire, extending over a large and diversified surface, with a population of various conditions and pursuits. It is in this variety that consists its prosperity; for the different parts become useful one to the other, not by identity, but by difference, of production, and thus each by interchange contributes to the interest of the other. Hence, our internal trade, that which carries on this exchange of the products and industry of the different portions of the United States, is one of our most important interests, I had almost said, the most important. Its operations are easy and silent, not always perceptible, but diffusing health and life throughout the system by the intercourse thus promoted, from neighborhood to neighborhood, and from State to State.

Let me explain this a little in detail. You are here in a grain-growing State. Your interest, then, is to have consumers, not growers, of grain. The hands that, in the broad belt which stretches across the country in which grain best succeeds, grow wheat, are interested to find mouths elsewhere to consume what they raise. The manufacturers of the North and East need the grain of the Middle States, and the cotton of the South, and

these in turn buy the manufactures of the East. Nor is this solely matter of interest, but it is in some degree brought about by the regulations of foreign governments. Our manufactures find no sale in Europe; and much of our grain is, under ordinary circumstances, excluded from its markets. In France it is never admitted, and in England in a manner so contingent and uncertain as to tantalize rather than gratify the American husbandman.

The internal trade, moreover, moves as it were in a circle, and not directly. The great imports of the country are at New York, whence they pass to the South and to the West, while our exports are not mainly from New York, but from the South. Thus the main imports are at one quarter of the Union, and the exports from another. The same thing is true of other branches of trade. The produce of Ohio, much of it, descends the river to New Orleans; but Ohio is supplied with foreign commodities and domestic fabrics chiefly through the New York canals, the Lakes, and the Ohio Canal. The live stock of Kentucky goes to the Carolinas; where, however, Kentucky buys nothing, but transmits the money to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, and in those cities procures what she wants, to be sent to her across the Alleghanies.

This circuit of trade, in a country of such great extent as ours, demands, more than in any country under heaven, a uniform currency for the whole people; that what is money in Carolina shall be so elsewhere; that what the Kentucky drover receives, what the planter of Alabama sells for, what the laborer in New York gets in pay for his work, and carries home to support his family, shall be of ascertained and uniform value.

This is not the time nor the occasion for an essay or dissertation on money; but I mean distinctly to express the opinion, that until the general government shall take in hand the currency of the country, until that government shall devise some means, I say not what, of raising the whole currency to the level of gold and silver, there can be no prosperity.

Let us retrace briefly the history of the currency question in this country, a most important branch of the commercial question. I appeal to all who have studied the history of the times, and of the Constitution, whether our fathers, in framing the Constitution which should unite us in common rights and a

common glory, had not also among their chief objects to provide a uniform system of commerce, including a uniform system of currency for the whole country. I especially invite the ingenuous youth of the country to go back to the history of those times, and particularly to the Virginia resolutions of 1786, and to the proceedings of the convention at Annapolis, and they will there find that the prevailing motive for forming a general government was, to secure a uniform system of commerce, of custom-house duties, and a general regulation of the trade, external and internal, of the whole country. It was no longer to be the commerce of New York, or of Massachusetts, but of the United States, to be carried on under that star-spangled banner, which was to bear to every shore, and over every sea, the glorious motto, *E Pluribus Unum*.

This being a chief and cherished object, when the first Congress under the Constitution assembled in New York, General Washington, in his speech, naturally drew its attention to the necessity of a uniform currency, looking, probably, at that time, to the mint first established in Philadelphia, to produce that currency.

What I wish to say is, that the difference in the currencies of the several States, and the want of a uniform system, both of commerce and currency, being among the chief inconveniences to be remedied by the establishment of the Constitution, the subject very naturally and properly attracted the early attention of the President, at the first session of the first Congress.

At the second session, the United States Bank was established. Without detaining you by quoting papers or speeches of that day, I will simply refer any one, curious to inquire, to the official documents of the time, and to the contemporaneous expressions of public opinion on the leading measures of that day, for proof that, while one object of incorporating a national bank was, that it might occasionally make loans to government, and take charge of the disbursement of its revenues, another object quite as prominent and important was to furnish a circulation, a paper circulation, founded on national resources, that should be current all over the country. General Washington had the sagacity to see, what, indeed, minds less sagacious than his could not fail to perceive, that the confidence reposed in the United States under the Constitution would impart to what-

ever came from Congress greater authority and value than could attach to any thing emanating from any single State.

The assumption by Congress of the State debts illustrates this remark; for the moment the United States became bound for those debts, and proceeded to fund them, they rose enormously and rapidly in value.

General Washington and his advisers saw that a mixed currency, if the paper had the mark of the Union, and bore on it the spread eagle, would command universal confidence throughout the country; and the result proved the wisdom of their foresight. From the incorporation of the bank to the expiration of its charter, embracing a period of great commercial and political vicissitudes, the currency furnished by that bank was never objected to: it, indeed, surpassed the hopes and equalled the desires of every body. The charter expired in 1811; how, or why, or from what state of parties, it is not my purpose to discuss, but the charter was not renewed. War with England was declared in June, 1812. Immediately upon the declaration of war, all the banks south of New England stopped payment, and those of New England ceased to issue notes; and thus, in fact, the payment of specie in those States amounted to little or nothing. At the close of the war, the condition of the currency, which had become very much deranged, not improving, Mr. Madison brought the subject before Congress. In his messages, both in 1814 and 1815, he dwelt earnestly on the subject; and in 1816 the second Bank of the United States was incorporated, and went at once into operation. At its outset, owing possibly to mismanagement, perhaps unavoidably, the bank met with heavy losses; but it fulfilled its functions in providing a currency for the whole country; and neither during the eight years of President Monroe's administration, nor the four years of President Adams's, were any complaints on that score heard. And now I desire to call attention to a particular fact. There were several candidates for the Presidency to succeed Mr. Monroe, — General Jackson, Mr. Adams, Mr. Crawford, and Mr. Clay. None of them received a sufficient number of votes from the electors to be chosen President. General Jackson received the largest number of any; but the House of Representatives chose John Quincy Adams President. From that moment a fierce opposition was commenced against his administration. I do not propose to

discuss the character or conduct of this opposition. The fact of its existence is all that I have to do with now, together with the fact, that, from the inauguration, in March, 1825, to March, 1829, an opposition, distinguished for its remarkable ability, perseverance, and ultimate success, was carried on under the name and flag of General Jackson.

All other candidates had disappeared. General Jackson was the sole opponent; and four years of active, angry, political controversy ensued, during which every topic of complaint that could be drawn into the vortex was drawn in; and yet — I beg special attention to this fact — not once during this four years' controversy did General Jackson himself, or any press in his interest, or any of his friends in Congress or elsewhere, raise a single voice against the condition of the currency, or propose any change therein. Of the hundreds here, possibly, who supported General Jackson, not one dreamed that he was elected to put down established institutions and overthrow the currency of the country. Who, among all those that, in the honest convictions of their hearts, cried, Hurrah for Jackson! believed or expected or desired that he would interfere with the Bank of the United States, or destroy the circulating medium of the country? [Here there arose a cry from the crowd, "None! None!"] I stand here upon the fact, and defy contradiction from any quarter, that there was no complaint then, anywhere, of the bank. There never before was a country, of equal extent, where exchanges and circulation were carried on so cheaply, so conveniently, and so securely. General Jackson was inaugurated in March, 1829, and pronounced an address upon that occasion, which I heard, as I did the oath which he took to support the Constitution. In that address were enumerated various objects, requiring, as he said, reform; but among them was not the Bank of the United States, nor the currency. This was in March, 1829. In December, 1829, General Jackson came out with the declaration (than which none I have ever heard surprised me more), that "the constitutionality of the Bank of the United States might be well questioned," and that it had failed to furnish a sound and uniform currency to the country.

What produced this change of views? Down to March of the same year, nothing of this sort was indicated or threatened. What, then, induced the change? [A voice from the crowd

said, "Martin Van Buren."] If that be so, it was the production of mighty consequences by a cause not at all proportioned. I will state, in connection with, and in elucidation of, this subject, certain transactions, which constitute one of those contingencies in human affairs, in which casual circumstances, acting upon the peculiar temper and character of a man of very decided temper and character, affect the fate of nations. A movement was made in the summer of 1829, for the purpose of effecting a change of certain officers of the branch of the Bank of the United States in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Mr. Woodbury, then a Senator from New Hampshire, transmitted to the president of the bank at Philadelphia a request, purporting to proceed from merchants and men of business of all parties, asking the removal of the president of that branch, *not on political grounds*, but as acceptable and advantageous to the business community. At the same time, Mr. Woodbury addressed a letter to the then Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Ingham, suggesting that his department should, on *political* grounds, obtain from the mother bank the removal of the branch president. This letter was transmitted to the president of the mother bank, and reached him about the same time with the other; so that, looking upon this picture and upon that, upon one letter, which urged the removal on political grounds, and upon the other, which denied that political considerations entered into the matter at all, he concluded to let things remain as they were. Appeals were then artfully made to the President of the United States. His feelings were enlisted, and it is well known that, when he had an object in view, his character was to go ahead. I mean to speak no evil nor disrespect of General Jackson. He has passed off the stage to his retirement at the Hermitage, which it would be as well, perhaps, that friends should not disturb, and where I sincerely wish he may, in tranquillity, pass the residue of his days. But General Jackson's character was imperious; he took the back track never; and however his friends might differ, or whether they concurred or dissented, they were fain always to submit. General Jackson put forth the pretension, that appointments by the bank should have regard to the wishes of the treasury; the matter was formally submitted to the directors of the bank, and they as formally determined that the treasury could not rightly or properly have any thing to say in

the matter. A long and somewhat angry correspondence ensued; for General Jackson found in the president of the bank a man who had something of his own quality. The result was that the bank resisted, and refused the required acquiescence in the dictation of the treasury.

This happened in the summer and autumn of 1829, and in December we had the message in which, for the first time, the bank was arraigned and denounced. Then came the application of the bank for re-incorporation, the passage of a bill for that purpose through both houses, and the Presidential veto. The Bank of the United States being thus put down, a multitude of new State banks sprang up; and next came a law, adopting some of these as deposit banks. Now, what I have to say in regard to General Jackson in this matter is this: he said he could establish a better currency; and, whether successful or not in this, it is at least to be said in his favor and praise, that he never did renounce the obligation of the federal government to take care of the currency, paper as well as metallic, of the people. It was in furtherance of this duty, which he felt called on to discharge, of "providing a better currency," that he recommended the prohibition of small bills. Why? Because, as it was argued, it would improve the general mixed currency of the country; and although he did not as distinctly as Mr. Madison admit and urge the duty of the federal government to provide a currency for the people, *he never renounced it*, but, on the contrary, in his message of December, 1835, held this explicit language: —

"By the use of the State banks, which do not derive their charters from the general government, and are not controlled by its authority, it is ascertained that the moneys of the United States can be collected and distributed without loss or inconvenience, and that all the wants of the community, in relation to exchange and currency, are supplied as well as they have ever been before." *

It is not here a question whether these banks did, or did not effect the purpose which General Jackson takes so much praise to himself for accomplishing through their agency, that of supplying the country with as good a currency as it ever enjoyed

* Message, December 2, 1835.

But why, if this was not a duty of the federal government, is it mentioned at all? In his last message, in December, 1836, reviewing the benefits (!) of his experiments on the currency, he thus speaks: —

"At the time of the removal of the deposits, it was alleged by the advocates of the Bank of the United States, that the State banks, whatever might be the regulations of the treasury department, could not make the transfers required by the government, or negotiate the domestic exchanges of the country. It is now well ascertained, that the real domestic exchanges performed through discounts by the United States Bank and its twenty-five branches were one third less than those of the deposit banks for an equal period of time; and if a comparison be instituted between the amounts of services rendered by these institutions on the broader basis which has been used by the advocates of the United States Bank, in estimating what they consider the domestic exchanges, the result will be still more favorable to the deposit banks."

Here we have the distinct assertion, that, through the State banks, he had accomplished more in establishing a good currency and easy exchanges than had been done by the Bank of the United States. However this fact may be, all this, I say, amounts to an acknowledgment of the duty of the general government, as a natural consequence of the power to coin money and regulate commerce, to take a supervision over that paper currency which is to supply the place of coin.

I contend for this truth, — that, down to the end of General Jackson's administration, no administration of this country had turned their back upon this power; and I now proceed to show, by extracts from Mr. Van Buren's letter to Sherrod Williams, to which, since he has largely referred to it of late, there can be no unfitness in my referring, that he, too, admitted the obligation of supplying a uniform currency and a convenient medium of exchange, which he thought could be effected by the State deposit banks.

"Sincerely believing, for the reasons which have just been stated, that the public funds may be as safely and conveniently transmitted from one portion of the Union to another, that domestic exchange can be as successfully and as cheaply effected, and the currency be rendered at least as sound, under the existing system, as those objects could be accomplished by means of a national bank, I would not seek a remedy for the evils to which you allude, should they unfortunately occur

through such a medium, even if the constitutional objections were not in the way." *

He denies not the duty of superintending the currency, but thinks the deposit banks of the States, under the control of Congress, can effect the purpose. This letter was written when Mr. Van Buren was a candidate for the Presidency.

Two months only after General Jackson had retired, and when his vigorous hand was no longer there to uphold it, the league of State banks fell, and crumbled into atoms; and when Mr. Van Buren had been only three months President, he convoked a special session of Congress for the ensuing September. The country was in wide-spread confusion, paralyzed in its commerce, its currency utterly deranged. What was to be done? What would Mr. Van Buren recommend? He could not go back to the Bank of the United States, for he had committed himself against its constitutionality; nor could he, with any great prospect of success, undertake to reconstruct the league of deposit banks; for it had recently failed, and the country had lost confidence in it. What, then, was to be done? He could go neither backward nor forward. What did he do? I mean not to speak disrespectfully, but I say he — *escaped!* Afraid to touch the fragments of the broken banks, unable to touch the United States Bank, he folded up his arms, and said, The government has nothing to do with providing a currency for the people. That I may do him no wrong, I will read his own language. His predecessors had all said, We *will not* turn our backs upon this duty of government to provide a uniform currency; his language is, We *will* turn our backs on this duty. He proposes nothing for the country, nothing for the relief of commerce, or the regulation of exchanges, but simply the means of getting money into the treasury without loss. In his first message to Congress, he thus expresses himself: —

"It is not the province of government to aid individuals in the transfer of their funds, otherwise than through the facilities of the Post-Office Department. As justly might it be called on to provide for the transportation of their merchandise.

* Mr. Van Buren's letter to Sherrod Williams of the 8th of August, 1836.

"If, therefore, I refrain from suggesting to Congress any specific plan for regulating the exchanges or the currency, relieving mercantile embarrassments, or interfering with the ordinary operations of foreign or domestic commerce, it is from a conviction that such are not within the constitutional province of the general government, and that their adoption would not promote the real and permanent welfare of those they might be designed to aid."

I put it to you, my friends, if this is a statesman's argument. You can transport your merchandise yourselves; you can build ships, and make your own wagons; but can you make a currency? Can you say what shall be money, and what shall not be money, and determine its value here and elsewhere? Why, it would be as reasonable to say, that the people may make war for themselves, and peace for themselves, as to say that they may exercise this other not less exclusive attribute of sovereignty, of making a currency for themselves. He insists that Congress has no power to regulate currency or exchanges, none to mitigate the embarrassments of the country, none to relieve its prostrate industry, and even if the power did exist, it would be unwise, in his opinion, to exercise it!

These are the doctrines of the President's first message; and I have no opinion of it now that I did not then entertain, and then express. I desire not to appear wise after the event, I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet, and yet I declare that when I heard the declarations of this message, and reflected on its consequences, I saw, or thought I saw, all of suffering, loss, and evil that is now before us.

Let us compare this declaration with that of one now numbered with the mighty dead; of one who has left behind a reputation excelled by that of no other man, as understanding thoroughly the Constitution; of one taking a leading part in its inception, and closing his public career by administering its highest office; I need not name JAMES MADISON.

In his message to Congress, in December, 1815, when the war had closed, and the country was laboring under the disordered currency of that period, the President thus spoke: —

"It is essential to every modification of the finances, that the benefits of a uniform national currency should be restored to the community. The absence of the precious metals will, it is believed, be a temporary

evil; but until they can again be rendered the general medium of exchange, it devolves on the wisdom of Congress to provide a substitute, which shall equally engage the confidence and accommodate the wants of the citizens throughout the Union. If the operation of the State banks cannot produce this result, the probable operation of a national bank will merit consideration," &c.

At that session, Congress incorporated the Bank of the United States; and at the next session, the President held this language respecting the currency and that bank: —

"For the interests of the community at large, as well as for the purposes of the treasury, it is essential that the nation should possess a currency of equal value, credit, and use, wherever it may circulate. The Constitution has intrusted Congress, exclusively, with the power of creating and regulating a currency of that description; and the measures taken, during the last session, in execution of the power, give every promise of success. The Bank of the United States has been organized under auspices the most favorable, and cannot fail to be an important auxiliary to those measures."

How that sounds now as an argument for the sub-treasury! The new doctrine which the administration has set up is one vitally affecting the business and pursuits of the people at large, extending its efforts to the interests of every family, and of every individual; and you must determine for yourselves if it shall be the doctrine of the country. But, before determining, look well at the Constitution, weigh all the precedents, and if names and authority are to be appealed to, contrast those of President Van Buren with those of the dead patriarch whose words I have just read to you, and decide accordingly.

We have heard much from the administration and its friends against banks and banking systems. I do not mean to discuss that topic; but I will say, that their tampering with the currency, and their course in relation to it, has, more than all other causes, increased the number of these banks.

But Mr. Van Buren's message contains a principle, — one altogether erroneous as a doctrine, and fatal in its operations, — the principle that the government has nothing to do with providing a currency for the country; in other words, proposing a separation between the money of the government and the money of the people. This is the great error, which cannot be compro-

mised with, which is susceptible of no amelioration or modification, like a disease which admits no remedy and no palliative but the caustic which shall totally eradicate it.

Do we not know that there must always be bank paper? Is there a man here who expects that he, or his children, or his children's children, shall see the day when only gold coin, glittering through silk purses, will be the currency of the country, to the entire exclusion of bank-notes? Not one. But we are told that the value of these notes is questionable. It is the neglect of government to perform its duties that makes them so. You here, in New York, have sound bank paper, redeemable in coin; and if you were surrounded by a Chinese wall, it might be indifferent to you whether government looked after the currency elsewhere or not. But you have daily business relations with Pennsylvania, and with the West, and East, and South, and you have a direct interest that their currency too shall be sound; for otherwise the very superiority of yours is, to a certain degree, an injury and loss to you, since you pay in the equivalent of specie for what you buy, and you sell for such money as may circulate in the States with which you deal. But New York cannot effect the general restoration of the currency, nor any one State, nor any number of States short of the whole, and hence the duty of the general government to superintend this interest.

But what does the sub-treasury propose? Its basis is a separation of the concerns of the treasury from those of the people. The law creating it directs, —

That there shall be provided, in the new treasury building at Washington, rooms for the use of the treasurer, and fireproof vaults and safes for the keeping of the public moneys; and these vaults and safes are declared to be the treasury of the United States:

That the vaults and safes of the mint in Philadelphia and the branch mint at New Orleans shall also be places for the deposit and safe-keeping of the public moneys; and that there shall be fireproof vaults and safes also in the custom-houses of New York and Boston, and in Charleston, South Carolina, and St. Louis, Missouri, and that these also shall be places of deposit:

That there shall be a receiver-general at New York, Boston,

Charleston, and St. Louis: that the treasurers of these mints, and the receivers-general, shall keep the public money, without loaning or using it, until ordered to be paid out; and into the hands of these treasurers and receivers-general all collectors of public money are to pay what they receive:

That the resolutions of Congress of April, 1816, be so far altered, as that hereafter, of all duties, taxes, and debts due and becoming due to the United States after June of this year, one fourth shall be paid in specie; after June of next year, one half; after June of 1842, three fourths; and after June, 1843, the whole; so that after June, 1843, all debts due the United States, whether for duties, taxes, sales of public lands, patents, postages of letters, or otherwise, "shall be paid in gold and silver only":

That from and after June, 1843, every officer or agent in the government, in making disbursements or payments on account of the United States, shall make such payments in gold and silver coin only:

The receiver-general in New York to be paid $4,000 salary, the others, each, $2,500.

I propose to say a few words on these provisions. In the first place, it seems very awkward to declare by law certain rooms in Washington, and certain safes and vaults therein, *the* treasury of the United States. We have been accustomed heretofore to look upon the treasury as a department of the government, recognized by the Constitution, which declares that no money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law. It may, however, be made a question whether any thing but these rooms and safes at Washington are now within this protection of the Constitution. It is senseless. It is absurd. It is as if the Legislature of New York should declare that a certain large room in the United States Hotel, and certain desks and tables therein, should constitute the Court for the Correction of Errors of the State of New York.*

What else does this bill do? It directs that there shall be certain vaults, and safes, and rooms. But it has not been for want of adequate vaults and rooms that we have lost our money, but owing to the hands to which we have intrusted the keys. It is in

* The Court of Errors was at the time holding a session at the United States Hotel at Saratoga.

the character of the officers, and not in the strength of bars and vaults, that we must look for the security of the public treasure. What would be thought in private life, if some rich merchant, John Jacob Astor, for instance, should determine no longer to trust his money with banks and bank directors, who, nevertheless, have a common interest with him in upholding the credit and stability of the currency, and in the safe-keeping, too, of their own money, and should build for himself certain safes and vaults, and, having placed his treasures therein, should, of some forty or fifty hungry individuals who might apply for the office of treasurer, give the keys to him who would work the cheapest? You might not, perhaps, pronounce him insane, but you would certainly say he acted very unlike John Jacob Astor. Now, what is true of private affairs is equally true of public affairs; and what would be absurd in an individual is not less so in a government. What is doing in Boston, where I belong? There are banks, respectable, specie-paying, trustworthy banks, managed by prudent and discreet men; and yet the treasure of the country is withdrawn from the keeping of one of those institutions, with a capital paid in of two millions of dollars, and locked up in safes and vaults, and one of the President's political friends from another State is sent for to come and keep the key. There is, in this case, no president to watch the cashier, no cashier to watch the teller, and no directors to overlook and control all; but the whole responsibility is vested in one man. Do you believe that, if, under such circumstances, the United States, following the example of individuals, were to offer to receive private funds in deposit in such a safe, and allow interest on them, they would be intrusted with any? There are no securities under this new system of keeping the public moneys that we had not before; while many that did exist, in the personal character, high trusts, and diversified duties of the officers and directors of banks, are removed. Moreover, the number of receiving and disbursing officers is increased; and the danger to the public treasure is increased in proportion.

The next provision is, that money once received into the treasury is not to be lent out; and if this law is to be the law of the land, this provision is not to be complained of, for dangerous indeed would be the temptation, and pernicious the consequences, if these treasurers were to be left at liberty to lend to

favorites and party associates the moneys drawn from the people. Yet the practice of this government hitherto has always been opposed to this policy of locking up the money of the people, when and while it is not required for the public service. Until this time the public deposits, like private deposits, were used by the banks in which they were placed, as some compensation for the trouble of safe-keeping, and in furtherance of the general convenience. When, in 1833, General Jackson formed the league of the deposit State banks, they were specially directed by Mr. Taney, then Secretary of the Treasury, to use the public funds in discounts for the accommodation of the business of the country. And why should this not be so? The President now says, If the money is kept in banks, it will be used by them in discounts, and they will derive benefit therefrom. What then? Is it a sufficient reason for depriving the community of a beneficial measure, that the banks that carry it out will also derive some benefit from it? The question is, Will the public be benefited? and if this be answered affirmatively, it is no objection that the banks will be too. The government is not to play the part of the dog in the manger. The doctrine is altogether pernicious, opposed to our experience, and to the habits and business of the nation.

The next provision is that requiring, after 1843, all dues to the government to be paid in gold and silver; and however onerous or injurious this provision, it is to be conceded that the government can, if they choose, enforce it. They have the power; and, as good citizens, we must submit. But such a practice will be inconvenient, I will say, oppressive. How are those who occupy three fourths of the surface of the United States to comply with this provision? Here, in commercial neighborhoods, and in large cities, and where the banks pay specie, the difficulty will be less; but where is the man who is to take up lands in the Western States to get specie? How transport it? The banks around him pay none, he gets none for his labor. And yet, oppressive as all this is, I admit that the government have a right to pass such a law, and that, while it is a law, it must be obeyed.

But what are we promised as the equivalent for all this inconvenience and oppression? Why, that the government in its turn will pay its debts in specie, and that thus what it receives with one hand it will pay out with the other, and a metallic cir-

culation will be established. I undertake to say, that no greater fallacy than this was ever uttered; the thing is impossible, and for this plain reason. The dues which the government collects come from individuals; each pays for himself. But it is far otherwise with the disbursements of government. They do not go down to individuals, and, seeking out the workmen and the laborers, pay to each his dues. Government pays in large sums, to large contractors, and to these it may pay gold and silver But do the gold and silver reach those whom the contractor employs? On the contrary, the contractors deal as they see fit with those whom they employ, or of whom they purchase. The Army and the Navy are fed and clothed by contract; the materials for expensive custom-houses, fortifications, for the Cumberland Road, and for other public works, are all supplied by contract. Large contractors flock to Washington, and receive their tons of gold and silver; but do they carry it with them to Maine, Mississippi, Michigan, or wherever their residence and vocation may be? No, not a dollar; but, selling it for depreciated paper, the contractor swells his previous profits by this added premium, and pays off those he owes in depreciated bank-notes. This is not an imaginary case. I speak of what is in proof. A contractor came to Washington last winter, and received a draft of $180,000 on a specie-paying bank in New York. This he sold at ten per cent. premium, and with the avails purchased funds in the West, with which he paid the producer, the farmer, the laborer. This is the operation of specie payments. It gives to the government hard money, to the rich contractor hard money; but to the producer and the laborer it gives paper, and bad paper only. And yet this system is recommended as specially favoring the poor man, rather than the rich, and credit is claimed for this administration as the poor man's friend.

Let us look a little more nearly at this matter, and see whom, in truth, it does favor. Who are the rich in this country? There is very little hereditary wealth among us; and large capitalists are not numerous. But some there are, nevertheless, who live upon the interest of their money; and these, certainly, do not suffer by this new doctrine; for their revenues are increased in amount, while the means of living are reduced in value. There is the money-lender, too, who suffers not by the reduction of prices all around him. Who else are the rich in this coun-

try? Why, the holders of office. He who has a fixed salary of from $2,500 to $5,000 finds prices falling; but does his salary fall? On the contrary, three fourths of that salary will now purchase more than the whole of it would purchase before; and he, therefore, is not dissatisfied with this new state of things.

There is, too, another class of our fellow-citizens, wealthy men, who have prospered during the last year; and they have prospered when nobody else has. I mean the owners of shipping. What is the reason? Give me a reason. Well, I will give you one. The shipping of the country carries on the trade the larger vessels being chiefly in the foreign trade. Now, why have these been successful? I will answer by an example. I live on the sea-coast of New England, and one of my nearest neighbors is the largest ship-owner, probably, in the United States. During the past year, he has made what might suffice for two or three fortunes of moderate size; and how has he made it? He sends his ships to Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, to take freights of cotton. This staple, whatever may be the price abroad, cannot be suffered to rot at home; and therefore it is shipped. My friend tells his captain to provision his ship at Natchez, for instance, where he buys flour and stores in the currency of that region, which is so depreciated that he is able to sell his bills on Boston at forty-eight per cent. premium! Here, at once, it will be seen, he gets his provision for half price, because prices do not always rise suddenly, as money depreciates. He delivers his freight in Europe, and gets paid for it in good money. The disordered currency of the country to which he belongs does not follow and afflict him abroad. He gets his freight in good money, places it in the hands of his owner's banker, who again draws at a premium for it. The ship-owner, then, makes money, when all others are suffering, *because he can escape from the influence of the bad laws and bad currency of his own country.*

Now, I will contrast the story of this neighbor with that of another of my neighbors, not rich. He is a New England mechanic, hard-working, sober, and intelligent, a tool-maker by trade, who wields his own sledge-hammer. His particular business is the making of augers for the South and Southwest. He has for years employed many hands, and been the support thereby of many families around him, himself, meanwhile, mod-

erately prosperous until these evil times came on. Annually, however, for some years, he has been going backwards. Not less industrious, not less frugal, he has yet found, that, however good nominally the prices he might receive at the South and Southwest for his tools, the cost of converting his Southern or Western funds into money current in New England was ruinous. He has persevered, however, always hoping for some change for the better, and contracting gradually the circle of his work and the number of his workmen, until at length, the little earnings of the past wasted, and the condition of the currency becoming worse and worse, he is reduced to bankruptcy; and he, and the twenty families that he supported, are beggared by no fault of their own. What was his difficulty? He *could not escape* from the evils of bad laws and bad currency at home; and while his rich neighbor, who could and did, is made richer by these very causes, he, the honest and industrious mechanic, is crushed to the earth; and yet we are told that this is a system for promoting the interests of the poor!

This leads me naturally to the great subject of *American labor*, which has hardly been considered or discussed as carefully as it deserves. What is *American labor?* It is best described by saying, *it is not* European labor. Nine tenths of the whole labor of this country is performed by those who cultivate the land they or their fathers own, or who, in their workshops, employ some little capital of their own own, and mix it up with their manual toil. No such thing exists in other countries. Look at the different departments of industry, whether agricultural, manufacturing, or mechanical, and you will find that, in almost all, the laborers mix up some little capital with the work of their hands. The laborer of the United States is the United States. Strike out the laborers of the United States, including therein all who in some way or other belong to the industrious and working classes, and you reduce the population of the United States from sixteen millions to one million. The American laborer is expected to have a comfortable home, decent though frugal living, and to be able to clothe and educate his children, to qualify them to take part, as all are called to do, in the political affairs and government of their country. Can this be said of any European laborer? Does he take any share in

the government of his country, or feel it an obligation to educate his children? In most parts of Europe, nine tenths of the laborers have no interest in the soil they cultivate, nor in the fabrics they produce; no hope, under any circumstances, of rising themselves, or of raising their children, above the condition of a day-laborer at wages; and only know the government under which they live by the sense of its burdens, which they have no voice in mitigating.

To compare such a state of labor with the labor of this country, or to reason from that to ours, is preposterous. And yet the doctrine now is, not of individuals only, but of the administration, that the wages of American labor must be brought down to the level of those of Europe.

I have said this is not the doctrine of a few individuals; and on that head I think injustice has been done to a Senator from Pennsylvania,* who has been made to bear a large share of the responsibility of suggesting such a policy. If I mistake not, the same idea is thrown out in the President's message at the commencement of the last session, and in the treasury report. Hear what Mr. Woodbury says:—

"Should the States not speedily suspend more of their undertakings which are unproductive, but, by new loans or otherwise, find means to employ armies of laborers in consuming rather than raising crops, and should prices thus continue in many cases to be unnaturally inflated, as they have been of late years, in the face of a contracting currency, the effect of it on our finances would be still more to lessen exports, and, consequently, the prosperity and revenue of our foreign trade."

He is for turning off from the public works these "armies of laborers," who consume without producing crops, and thus bring down prices, both of crops and labor. Diminish the mouths that consume, and multiply the arms that produce, and you have the treasury prescription for mitigating distress and raising prices! How would that operate in this great State? You have, perhaps, some fifteen thousand men employed on your public works, works of the kind that the Secretary calls "unproductive"; and, even with such a demand as they must produce for provisions, prices are very low. The Secretary's remedy is to set them to raise provisions themselves, and thus augment

* Mr. Buchanan.

the supply, while they diminish the demand. In this way, the wages of labor are to be reduced, as well as the prices of agricultural productions. But this is not all. I have in my hand an extract from a speech in the House of Representatives of a zealous supporter, as it appears, of the administration, who maintains that, other things being reduced in proportion, you may reduce the wages of labor, without evil consequences. And where does he seek this example? On the shores of the Mediterranean. He fixes upon Corsica and Sardinia. But what is the Corsican laborer, that he should be the model upon which American labor is to be formed? Does he know any thing himself? Has he any education, or does he give any to his children? Has he a home, a freehold, and the comforts of life around him? No: with a crust of bread and a handful of olives, his daily wants are satisfied. And yet, from such a state of society, the laborer of New England, the laborer of the United States, is to be taught submission to low wages. The extract before me states that the wages of Corsica are,

> "For the male laborer, 24 cents a day;
> And the female do. 11 cents do.";—

both, I presume, finding their own food. And the honorable gentleman argues, that, owing to the greater cheapness of other articles, this is relatively as much as the American laborer gets; and he illustrates the fact by this bill of clothing for a Corsican laborer: —

"Jacket,	lasting	24	months,	8	francs;
Cap,	do.	24	do.	2	do.
Waistcoat,	do.	36	do.	4	do.
Pantaloons,	do.	18	do.	5	do.
Shirt,	do.	12	do.	3	do.
Pair of shoes,	do.	6	do.	6	do.
				28	francs."

Eight francs are equal to one dollar and sixty cents, and five francs to one dollar. Now, what say you, my friends? What will the farmer of New York, of Pennsylvania, or of New England say to the idea of walking on Sunday to church, at the head of his family, in his jacket *two years old?* What will the young man say, when, his work ended, he desires to visit the families of his neighbors, to the one pair of pantaloons, not

quite two years old, indeed, but, as the farmers say of a colt, "coming two next grass," and which, for eighteen months, have every day done yeoman's service? Away with it all! Away with this plan for humbling and degrading the free, intelligent, well-educated, and well-paid laborer of the United States to the level of the almost brute laborer of Europe!

There is not much danger that schemes and doctrines such as these shall find favor with the people. They understand their own interest too well for that. Gentlemen, I am a farmer, on the sea-shore, and have, of course, occasion to employ some degree of agricultural labor. I am sometimes also rowed out to sea, being, like other New England men, fond of occasionally catching a fish, and finding health and recreation, in warm weather, from the air of the ocean. For the few months during which I am able to enjoy this retreat from labor, public or professional, I do not often trouble my neighbors, or they me, with conversation on politics. It happened, however, about three weeks ago, that, on such an excursion as I have mentioned, with one man only with me, I mentioned this doctrine of the reduction of prices, and asked him his opinion of it. He said he did not like it. I replied, "The wages of labor, it is true, are reduced; but then flour and beef, and perhaps clothing, all of which you buy, are reduced also. What, then, can be your objections?" "Why," said he, "it is true that flour is now low; but then it is an article that may rise suddenly, by means of a scanty crop in England, or at home; and if it should rise from five dollars to ten, I do not know for certain that it would fetch the price of my labor up with it. But while wages are high, then I am safe; and if produce chances to fall, so much the better for me. But there is another thing. I have but one thing to sell, that is, my labor; but I must buy many things, not only flour, and meat, and clothing, but also some articles that come from other countries, — a little sugar, a little coffee, a little tea, a little of the common spices, and such like. Now, I do not see how these foreign articles will be brought down by reducing wages at home; and before the price is brought down of the only thing I have to sell, I want to be sure that the prices will fall also, not of a part, but of all the things which I must buy."

Now, Gentlemen, though he will be astonished, or amused,

that I should tell the story before such a vast and respectable assemblage as this, I will place this argument of *Seth Peterson*, sometimes farmer and sometimes fisherman on the coast of Massachusetts, stated to me while pulling an oar with each hand, and with the sleeves of his red shirt rolled up above his elbows, against the reasonings, the theories, and the speeches of the administration and all its friends, in or out of Congress, and take the verdict of the country, and of the civilized world, whether he has not the best of the argument.

Since I have adverted to this conversation, Gentlemen, allow me to say that this neighbor of mine is a man fifty years of age, one of several sons of a poor man; that by his labor he has obtained some few acres, his own unencumbered freehold, has a comfortable dwelling, and plenty of the poor man's blessings. Of these, I have known six, decently and cleanly clad, each with the book, the slate, and the map proper to its age, all going at the same time daily to enjoy the blessing of that which is the great glory of New England, the common free school. Who can contemplate this, and thousands of other cases like it, not as pictures, but as common facts, without feeling how much our free institutions, and the policy hitherto pursued, have done for the comfort and happiness of the great mass of our citizens? Where in Europe, where in any part of the world out of our own country, shall we find labor thus rewarded, and the general condition of the people so good? Nowhere; nowhere! Away, then, with the injustice and the folly of reducing the cost of productions with us to what is called the common standard of the world! Away, then, away at once and for ever, with the miserable policy which would bring the condition of a laborer in the United States to that of a laborer in Russia or Sweden, in France or Germany, in Italy or Corsica! Instead of following these examples, let us hold up our own, which all nations may well envy, and which, unhappily, in most parts of the earth, it is easier to envy than to imitate.

But it is the cry and effort of the times to stimulate those who are called poor against those who are called rich; and yet, among those who urge this cry, and seek to profit by it, there is betrayed sometimes an occasional sneer at whatever savors of humble life. Witness the reproach against a candidate now before the people for their highest honors, that a log cabin, with plenty of hard cider, is good enough for him!

It appears to some persons, that a great deal too much use is made of the symbol of the log cabin. No man of sense supposes, certainly, that the having lived in a log cabin is any further proof of qualification for the Presidency, than as it creates a presumption that any one who, rising from humble condition, or under unfavorable circumstances, has been able to attract a considerable degree of public attention, is possessed of reputable qualities, moral and intellectual.

But it is to be remembered, that this matter of the log cabin originated, not with the friends of the Whig candidate, but with his enemies. Soon after his nomination at Harrisburg, a writer for one of the leading administration papers spoke of his "log cabin," and his use of "hard cider," by way of sneer and reproach. As might have been expected, (for pretenders are apt to be thrown off their guard,) this taunt at humble life proceeded from the party which claims a monopoly of the purest democracy. The whole party appeared to enjoy it, or, at least, they countenanced it by silent acquiescence; for I do not know that, to this day, any eminent individual or any leading newspaper attached to the administration has rebuked this scornful jeering at the supposed humble condition or circumstances in life, past or present, of a worthy man and a war-worn soldier. But it touched a tender point in the public feeling. It naturally roused indignation. What was intended as reproach was immediately seized on as merit. "Be it so! Be it so!" was the instant burst of the public voice. "Let him be the log cabin candidate. What you say in scorn, we will shout with all our lungs. From this day forward, we have our cry of rally; and we shall see whether he who has dwelt in one of the rude abodes of the West may not become the best house in the country!"

All this is natural, and springs from sources of just feeling. Other things, Gentlemen, have had a similar origin. We all know that the term "Whig" was bestowed in derision, two hundred years ago, on those who were thought too fond of liberty; and our national air of "Yankee Doodle" was composed by British officers, in ridicule of the American troops. Yet, ere long, the last of the British armies laid down its arms at Yorktown, while this same air was playing in the ears of officers and men. Gentlemen, it is only shallow-minded pretenders who either make distinguished origin matter of personal merit, or obscure

origin matter of personal reproach. Taunt and scoffing at the humble condition of early life affect nobody, in this country, but those who are foolish enough to indulge in them, and they are generally sufficiently punished by public rebuke. A man who is not ashamed of himself need not be ashamed of his early condition.

Gentlemen, it did not happen to me to be born in a log cabin; but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log cabin, raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early that, when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney, and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada. Its remains still exist. I make to it an annual visit. I carry my children to it, to teach them the hardships endured by the generations which have gone before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents, which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it are now among the living; and if ever I am ashamed of it, or if I ever fail in affectionate veneration for him who reared it, and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof, and, through the fire and blood of a seven years' revolutionary war, shrunk from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice, to serve his country, and to raise his children to a condition better than his own, may my name and the name of my posterity be blotted for ever from the memory of mankind!

[Mr. Webster then reviewed the expenditures of the government; but the reporter finds, with regret, that the sheet containing this portion of the speech has been mislaid or lost. We supply, therefore, from memory, a very brief, and, we are aware, a very inadequate, outline of the argument.]

The expenditures of this administration have been eminently wasteful and extravagant. Over and above the ordinary revenue of the country, Mr. Van Buren has spent more than *twenty millions* that reached the treasury from other sources. I specify,

Reserved under the Deposit Act, ...	$ 6,000,000
Fourth instalment of surplus, kept back, . .	9,000,000
Payment by the Bank of United States on its bonds,	5,000,000
	$ 20,000,000

But even this has been found insufficient for the prodigality of the administration; and we had not been long assembled in Congress before a demand was made upon it, notwithstanding the flattering representations of the message and the treasury report, for authority to issue *five millions* more of treasury notes This, we were assured, if Congress would only keep within the estimates submitted by the departments, would be ample. Congress did keep within the estimates; and yet, before we broke up, intimations came from the treasury that they must have authority to borrow or issue treasury notes for four and a half millions more!

This time even the friends of the administration demurred, and, finally, refused to grant this new aid; and what then was the alternative? Why, after having voted appropriations for the various branches of the public service, all within the estimates, and all of which, they were told, were indispensable, Congress conferred on the President, by a special provision, authority to withhold these appropriations from such objects as he pleased, and, out of certain classes, to select, at his discretion, those upon which money should be expended. Entire authority was thus given to the President over all these expenditures, in evasion, as it seems to me, of that provision of the Constitution forbidding all expenditure except by virtue of appropriations, which, if it mean any thing, must mean the specification of distinct sums for distinct purposes.

In this way, then, it is proposed to keep back from indispensable works, or works declared by the administration to be indispensable, four and a half millions, which are, nevertheless, appropriated, and which, with five millions of treasury notes already issued, will constitute a debt of from nine to ten millions.

So, then, when General Harrison shall succeed, in March next, to the Presidential chair, all that he will inherit from his predecessors, besides their brilliant example, will be these treasury vaults and safes, without a dollar in them, and a debt of *ten millions of dollars*.

The whole revenue policy of this administration has been founded in error. While the treasury is becoming poorer and poorer, articles of luxury are admitted free of duty. Look at the custom-house returns, — twenty millions of dollars worth of silks imported in one year, free of duty, and other articles of

luxury in proportion, that should be made to contribute to the revenue.

We have, in my judgment, imported *excessively;* and yet the President urges it as an objection to works of public improvement, to railroads and canals, that they diminish our importations, and thereby interfere with the comforts of the people. His message says, —

"Our people will not long be insensible to the extent of the burdens entailed upon them by the false system that has been operating on their sanguine, energetic, and industrious character; nor to the means necessary to extricate themselves from these embarrassments. The weight which presses upon a large portion of the people and the States is an enormous debt, foreign and domestic. The foreign debt of our States, corporations, and men of business can scarcely be less than two hundred millions of dollars, requiring more than ten millions of dollars a year to pay the interest. This sum has to be paid out of the exports of the country, and must of necessity cut off imports to that extent, or plunge the country more deeply in debt from year to year. It is easy to see that the increase of this foreign debt must augment the annual demand on the exports to pay the interest, and to the same extent diminish the imports; and in proportion to the enlargement of the foreign debt, and the consequent increase of interest, must be the decrease of the import trade. In lieu of the comforts which it now brings us, we might have one gigantic banking institution, and splendid, but in many instances profitless, railroads and canals, absorbing, to a great extent, in interest upon the capital borrowed to construct them, the surplus fruits of national industry for years to come, and securing to posterity no adequate return for the comforts which the labor of their hands might otherwise have secured."

What are these comforts that we are to get so much more of, if we will only stop our railroads and canals? Foreign goods, loss of employment at home, European wages, and, lastly, direct taxation.

One of the gentlemen of the South, of that nullifying State Rights party which has absorbed the administration, or been absorbed by it, comes boldly out with the declaration, that the period is arrived for a *direct tax on land;* and, holding up this idea, others have said *that it will bring the North to the grindstone.* We shall see, before this contest is over, who will be the parties ground, and who the grinders. It is, however, but just to add, that, thus far, this is only an expression of individual opinion, and I do not allege it to be otherwise.

I had proposed to say something of the militia bill; but it is already so late that I must forego this topic. ["No, no! Go on, go on!" — from the crowd.]

[Mr. Webster resumed, and briefly analyzed the bill. Owing, however, to the lateness of the hour, he did not go largely into the discussion. He did not, he said, mean to charge Mr. Van Buren with any purpose to play the part of a Cæsar or a Cromwell; but he did say that, in his judgment, the plan, as recommended by the President in his message, and of which the annual report of the Secretary of War, accompanying the message, developed the leading features, would, if carried into operation, be expensive, burdensome, in derogation of the Constitution, and dangerous to our liberties. Mr. Webster referred to the President's recent letter to some gentleman in Virginia, endeavoring to exculpate himself for the recommendation in the message, by attempting to show a difference between the plan then so strongly commended, and that submitted in detail, some months afterwards, by the Secretary of War, to Congress. Mr. Webster pronounced this attempt wholly unsatisfactory, and then went on to say,]

I have now frankly stated my opinions as to the nature of the present excitement, and have answered the question I propounded as to the causes of the revolution in public sentiment now in progress. Will this revolution succeed? Does it move the masses, or is it an ebullition merely on the surface? And who is it that opposes the change which seems to be going forward? [Here some one in the crowd cried out, "None, hardly, but the office-holders, oppose it."] I hear one say that the office-holders oppose it; and that is true. If they were quiet, in my opinion, a change would take place almost by common consent. I have heard of an anecdote, perhaps hardly suited to the sobriety and dignity of this occasion, but which confirms the answer which my friend in the crowd has given to my question. It happened to a farmer's son, that his load of hay was blown over by a sudden gust, on an exposed plain. Those near him, seeing him manifest a degree of distress, which such an accident would not usually occasion, asked him the reason; he said he should not *take on* so much about it, only father was under the load. I think it very probable, Gentlemen, that there are many now very active and zealous friends, who would not care much whether the wagon of the administration were blown over

or not, if it were not for the fear that father, or son, or uncle, or brother, might be found under the load. Indeed, it is remarkable how frequently the fire of patriotism glows in the breasts of the holders of office. A thousand favored contractors shake with horrid fear, lest the proposed change should put the interests of the public in great danger. Ten thousand post-offices, moved by the same apprehension, join in the cry of alarm, while a perfect earthquake of disinterested remonstrance proceeds from the custom-houses. Patronage and favoritism tremble and quake, through every limb and every nerve, lest the people should be found in favor of a change, which might endanger the liberties of the country, or at least break down its present eminent and distinguished prosperity, by abandoning the measures, so wise, so beneficent, so successful, and so popular, which the present administration has pursued!

Fellow-citizens, we have all sober and important duties to perform. I have not addressed you to-day for the purpose of joining in a premature note of triumph, or raising a shout for anticipated victories. We are in the controversy, not through it. It is our duty to spare no pains to circulate information, and to spread the truth far and wide. Let us persuade those who differ from us, if we can, to hear both sides. Let us remind them that we are all embarked together, with a common interest and a common fate. And let us, without rebuke or unkindness, beseech them to consider what the good of the whole requires, what is best for them and for us.

There are two causes which keep back thousands of honest men from joining those who wish for a change. The first of these is the fear of reproach from former associates, and the pain which party denunciation is capable of inflicting. But, surely, the manliness of the American character is superior to this! Surely, no American citizen will feel himself chained to the wheels of any party, nor bound to follow it, against his conscience and his sense of the interest of the country. Resolution and decision ought to dissipate such restraints, and to leave men free at once to act upon their own convictions. Unless this can be done, party has entailed upon us a miserable slavery, by compelling us to act against our consciences on questions of the greatest importance.

The other cause is the constant cry that the party of the ad-

ministration is the true democratic party, or the more popular party in the government and in the country. The falsity of this claim has not been sufficiently exposed. It should have been met, and should be now met, not only by denial, but by proof. If they mean the new democracy, — the cry against credit, against industry, against labor, against a man's right to leave his own earnings to his own children, — why, then, doubtless, they are right; all this sort of democracy is theirs. But if by democracy they mean a conscientious and stern adherence to the true popular principles of the Constitution and the government, then I think they have very little claim to it. Is the augmentation of executive power a democratic principle? Is the separation of the currency of the government from the currency of the people a democratic principle? Is the imbodying a large military force, in time of peace, a democratic principle?

Let us entreat honest men not to take names for things, nor pretences for proofs. If democracy, in any constitutional sense, belongs to our adversaries, let them show their title and produce their evidence. Let the question be examined; and let not intelligent and well-meaning citizens be kept to the support of measures which in their hearts and consciences they disapprove, because their authors put forth such loud claims to the sole possession of regard for the people.

Fellow-citizens of the County of Saratoga, in taking leave of you, I cannot but remind you how distinguished a place your county occupies in the history of the country. I cannot be ignorant, that in the midst of you are many, at this moment, who saw in this neighborhood the triumph of republican arms in the surrender of General Burgoyne. I cannot doubt that a fervent spirit of patriotism burns in their breasts and in the breasts of their children. They helped to save their country amidst the storms of war; they will help to save it, I am fully persuaded, in the present severe civil crisis. I verily believe it is true, that, of all that are left to us from the Revolution, nine tenths are with us in the existing contest. If there be living a Revolutionary officer, or soldier, who has joined in the attacks upon General Harrison's military character, I have not met with him. It is not, therefore, in the county of Saratoga, that a cause sustained by such means is likely to prevail.

Fellow-citizens, the great question is now before the country. If, with the experience of the past, the American people think proper to confirm power in the hands which now hold it, and thereby sanction the leading policy of the administration, it will be your duty and mine to bow, with submission, to the public will; but, for myself, I shall not believe it possible for me to be of service to the country, in any department of public life. I shall look on, with no less love of country than ever, but with fearful forebodings of what may be near at hand.

But I do not at all expect that result. I fully believe the change is coming. If we all do our duty, we shall restore the government to its former policy, and the country to its former prosperity. And let us here, to-day, fellow-citizens, with full resolution and patriotic purpose of heart, give and take pledges, that, until this great controversy be ended, our time, our talents, our efforts, are all due, and shall all be faithfully given, to OUR COUNTRY.

Whig Principles and Purposes

rious counties and towns in Massachusetts, that of Suffolk bringing up the rear. These, also, all carried appropriate banners, many with devices and inscriptions highly significant, original, and spirited, and wrought with great beauty. A large body of seamen appeared in the Suffolk delegation. In another section of the same delegation was a printing-press, in full operation, drawn by six horses.

The length of the procession was four miles, and two hours were required for its passage by any given point. It is impossible adequately to describe the enthusiasm which prevailed, or the extreme beauty and singularity of the spectacle. Numerous bands of music were placed in different parts of the procession. The entire line of streets through which it passed was filled with spectators. The windows and balconies were thronged with women and children, waving their handkerchiefs in token of sympathy with the delegates, while the latter acknowledged the attention with continual cheers. The streets were decorated with ensigns and pennons, and occasionally with triumphal arches adorned with evergreens and flowers. The whole city was alive with the festival.

In this manner the procession moved, in perfect order, through the principal streets, over Warren Bridge, and thence to the battle-ground on Bunker Hill. A general expectation of a speech from Mr. Webster had gone abroad. But the vast multitude anticipated had seemed to render it expedient to dispense with the usual mode of proceeding at political meetings, and, instead of a popular discussion, to put forth a carefully prepared and formal manifesto of the principles which governed the Whig party in the existing contest. A slight organization accordingly took place. Mr. Webster was invited to act as the presiding officer of the convention, and the following declaration of principles, previously drawn up by him, and signed by him on behalf of the assembly, was publicly read.

This closed the proceedings on the Hill, where the dispersion of the multitude was hastened by a heavy rain. In the evening, political meetings were held in Faneuil Hall, and other public halls in Boston, at which patriotic addresses of great ability were made by Messrs. Watkins Leigh of Virginia, Ellsworth of Connecticut, Pennington of New Jersey, O'Fallon of Missouri, Ogden Hoffman, Philip Hone, and Charles King of New York, Upham of Vermont, Neal of Maine, Dawson of Michigan, and many other gentlemen of distinction from various parts of the Union.

The importance of this demonstration, as a display of sympathy between the people of the remotest members of the Union, and its tendency, in this way, to fortify and animate the true spirit of the Constitution, have seemed to warrant a notice in greater detail than would be due, in this place, to the ordinary manifestations of contemporary political feeling.

Whig Principles and Purposes*

When men pause from their ordinary occupations, and assemble in great numbers, a proper respect for the judgment of the country and of the age requires that they should clearly set forth the grave causes which have brought them together, and the purposes which they seek to promote.

Feeling the force of this obligation, fifty thousand of the free electors of the New England States, honored also by the presence of like free electors from nearly every other State in the Union, having assembled on Bunker Hill, on this 10th day of September, 1840, proceed to set forth a declaration of their principles, and of the occasion and objects of their meeting.

In the first place, we declare our unalterable attachment to that public liberty, the purchase of so much blood and treasure, in the acquisition of which the field whereon we stand obtained early and imperishable renown. Bunker Hill is not a spot on which we shall forget the principles of our fathers, or suffer any thing to quench within our own bosoms the love of freedom which we have inherited from them.

In the next place, we declare our warm and hearty devotion to the Constitution of the country, and to that Union of the States which it has so happily cemented, and so long and so prosperously preserved. We call ourselves by no local names, we recognize no geographical divisions, while we give utterance to our sentiments on high constitutional and political subjects. We are Americans, citizens of the United States, knowing no other country, and desiring to be distinguished by no other ap-

* A Declaration of Principles and Purposes, adopted by a General Convention of the Whigs of New England, at Bunker Hill, on the 10th of September, 1840, prepared by Mr. Webster, and signed by him as President of the Convention.

pellation. We believe the Constitution, while administered wisely and in its proper spirit, to be capable of protecting all parts of the country, securing all interests, and perpetuating a national brotherhood among all the States. We believe that to foment local jealousies, to attempt to prove the existence of opposite interests between one part of the country and another, and thus to disseminate feelings of distrust and alienation, while it is in contemptuous disregard of the counsels of the great father of his country, is but one form in which irregular ambition, destitute of all true patriotism, and a love of power, reckless of the means of its gratification, exhibit their unsubdued and burning desire.

We believe, too, that party spirit, however natural or unavoidable it may be in free republics, yet, when it gains such an ascendency in men's minds as leads them to substitute party for country, to seek no ends but party ends, no approbation but party approbation, and to fear no reproach or contumely so that there be no party dissatisfaction, not only alloys the true enjoyment of such institutions, but weakens, every day, the foundations on which they stand.

We are in favor of the liberty of speech and of the press; we are friends of free discussion; we espouse the cause of popular education; we believe in man's capacity for self-government; we desire to see the freest and widest dissemination of knowledge and of truth; and we believe, especially, in the benign influence of religious feeling and moral instruction on the social, as well as on the individual, happiness of man.

Holding these general sentiments and opinions, we have come together to declare that, under the present administration of the general government, a course of measures has been adopted and pursued, in our judgments, disastrous to the best interests of the country, threatening the accumulation of still greater evils, utterly hostile to the true spirit of the Constitution and to the principles of civil liberty, and calling upon all men of honest purpose, disinterested patriotism, and unbiased intelligence, to put forth their utmost constitutional efforts in order to effect a change.

General Andrew Jackson was elected President of the United States, and took the oaths of office on the 4th of March, 1829; and we readily admit that, under his administration, certain

portions of the public affairs were conducted with ability. But we have to lament that he was not proof against the insinuations and influences of evil counsellors, or perhaps against his own passions, when moved and excited. Hence, in one most important branch of the public interest, in that essential part of commercial regulation which respects the money, the currency, the circulation, and the internal exchanges of the country, accidental occurrences, acting on his characteristic love of rule, and uneasiness under opposition, led him to depart from all that was expected from him, and to enter upon measures which plunged both him and the country in greater and greater difficulties at every step, so that, in this respect, his whole course of administration was but a series of ill-fated experiments, and of projects framed in disregard of prudence and precedent, and bursting in rapid succession; the final explosion taking place a few months after his retirement from office.

General Jackson was not elected with any desire or expectation, on the part of any of his supporters, that he would interfere with the currency of the country. We affirm this as the truth of history. It is incapable of refutation or denial. It is as certain as that the American Revolution was not undertaken to destroy the rights of property, or overthrow the obligation of morals.

But, unhappily, he became involved in a controversy with the then existing Bank of the United States. He manifested a desire, how originating or by whom inspired is immaterial, to exercise a political influence over that institution, and to cause that institution to exercise, in turn, a political influence over the community. Published documents prove this, as plainly as they prove any other act of his administration. In this desire he was resisted, thwarted, and finally defeated. But what he could not govern, he supposed he could destroy; and the event showed that he did not overrate his popularity and his power. He pursued the bank to the death, and achieved his triumph by the veto of 1832. The accustomed means of maintaining a sound and a uniform currency, for the use of the whole country, having been thus trampled down and destroyed, recourse was had to those new modes of experimental administration, to which we have already adverted, and which terminated so disastrously, both for the reputation of his administration and for the welfare of the country.

But General Jackson did not deny his constitutional obligations, nor seek to escape from their force. He never professedly abandoned all care over the general currency. His whole conduct shows that he admitted, throughout, the duty of the general government to maintain a supervision over the currency of the country, both metallic and paper, for the general good and use of the people; and he congratulated both himself and the nation, that, by the measures adopted by him, the currency and the exchanges of the country were placed on a better footing than they ever had been under the operation of a Bank of the United States. This confidence in his own experiments, we know, proved most illusory. But the frequency with which he repeated this and similar declarations establishes incontestably his own sense of the duty of government.

In all the measures of General Jackson upon the currency, the present chief magistrate is known to have concurred. Like him, he was opposed to the Bank of the United States; like him, he was in favor of the State deposit banks; and, like him, he insisted that, by the aid of such banks, the administration had accomplished all that could be desired on the great subjects of the currency and the exchange.

But the catastrophe of May, 1837, produced a new crisis, by overthrowing the last in the series of experiments, and creating an absolute necessity, either of returning to that policy of the government which General Jackson had repudiated, or of renouncing altogether the constitutional duty which it had been the object of that policy to perform. The latter branch of the alternative was adopted. Refuge was sought in escape. A duty, up to that moment admitted by all, was suddenly denied, and the fearful resolution announced, that government would hereafter provide for its own revenues, and that, for the rest, the people must take care of themselves.

Assembled here to-day, and feeling, in common with the whole country, the evil consequences of these principles and these measures, we pronounce against them all, from first to last, our deep and solemn sentence of condemnation. We condemn the early departure of General Jackson from that line of policy which he was expected to pursue. We deplore the temper which led him to his original quarrel with the bank. We deplore the headstrong spirit which instigated him to pursue

that institution to its destruction. We deplore the timidity of some, the acquiescence of others, and the subserviency of all of his party, which enabled him to carry its whole, unbroken phalanx to the support of measures, and the accomplishment of purposes, which we know to have been against the wishes, the remonstrances, and the consciences of many of the most respectable and intelligent. We deplore his abandonment of those means for assuring a good currency, which had been successfully tried for forty years; his rash experiments with great interests; and the perseverance with which he persisted in them, when men of different temperament must have been satisfied of their uselessness and impotence.

But General Jackson's administration, authority, and influence are now historical. They belong to the past, while we have to do, to-day, with the serious evils, and the still more alarming portents, of the present. We remonstrate, therefore, most earnestly and emphatically, against the policy of the present administration upon this subject. We protest against the truth of its principles. We deny the propriety and justice of its measures. We are constrained to have too little respect for its objects, and we desire to rouse the country, so far as we can, to the evils which oppress and the dangers that surround us.

We insist that the present administration has consulted its own party ends, and the preservation of its own power, to the manifest neglect of great objects of public interest. We think there is no liberality, no political comprehension, no just or enlarged policy, in its leading measures. We look upon its abandonment of the currency as fatal; and we regard its system of sub-treasuries as but a poor device to avoid a high obligation, or as the first in a new series of ruthless experiments. We believe its professions in favor of a hard-money currency to be insincere; because we do not believe that any person of common information and ordinary understanding can suppose that the use of paper, as a circulating medium, will be discontinued, even if such discontinuance were desirable, unless the government shall break down the acknowledged authority of the State governments to establish banks. We believe the clamor against State banks, State bonds, and State credits, to have been raised by the friends of the administration to divert public attention

from its own mismanagement, and to throw on others the consequence of its own conduct. We heard nothing of all this in the early part of General Jackson's administration, nor until his measures had brought the currency of the country into the utmost disorder. We know that, in times past, the present chief magistrate has, of all men, had most to do with the systems of State banks, the most faith in their usefulness, and no very severely chastened desire to profit by their influence. We believe that the purpose of exercising a money influence over the community has never departed from the administration. What it could not accomplish by an attempt to bend the Bank of the United States to its purposes, we believe it has sought, and now seeks, to effect by its project of the sub-treasury. We believe that, in order to maintain the principles upon which the system of the sub-treasury is founded, the friends of the administration have been led to espouse opinions destructive of the internal commerce of the country, paralyzing to its whole industry, tending to sink its labor, both in price and in character, to the degraded standard of the uninformed, the ignorant, the suffering labor of the worst parts of Europe. Led by the same necessity, or pushing the same principles still farther, and with a kind of revolutionary rapidity, we have seen the rights of property not only assailed, but denied; the boldest agrarian notions put forth; the power of transmission from father to son openly denounced; the right of one to participate in the earnings of another, to the rejection of the natural claims of his own children, asserted as a fundamental principle of the new democracy; — and all this by those who are in the pay of government, receiving large salaries, and whose offices would be nearly sinecures, but for the labor performed in the attempt to give currency to these principles and these opinions. We believe that the general tone of the measures of the administration, the manner in which it confers favors, its apparent preference for partisans of extreme opinions, and the readiness with which it bestows its confidence on the boldest and most violent, are producing serious injuries upon the political morals and general sentiments of the country. We believe that to this cause is fairly to be attributed the most lamentable change which has taken place in the temper, the sobriety, and the wisdom with which the high public counsels have been hitherto conducted. We look with

alarm to the existing state of things, in this respect; and we would most earnestly, and with all our hearts, as well for the honor of the country as for its interests, beseech all good men to unite with us in an attempt to bring back the deliberative age of the government, to restore to the collected bodies of the people's representatives that self-respect, decorum, and dignity, without which the business of legislation can make no regular progress, and is always in danger either of accomplishing nothing, or of reaching its ends by unjustifiable and violent means.

We believe the conduct of the administration respecting the public revenue to be highly reprehensible. It has expended twenty millions, previously accumulated, besides all the accruing income since it came into power; and there seems at this moment to be no doubt, that it will leave to its successors a public debt of from five to ten millions of dollars. It has shrunk from its proper responsibilities. With the immediate prospect of an empty treasury, it has yet not had the manliness to recommend to Congress any adequate provision. It has constantly spoken of the excess of receipts over expenditures, until this excess has finally manifested itself in an absolute necessity for loans, and in a power conferred on the President, altogether new, and in our judgment hostile to the whole spirit of the Constitution, to meet the event of want of resources by withholding, out of certain classes of appropriations made by Congress, such as he chooses to think may be best spared. It lives by shifts and contrivances, by shallow artifices and delusive names, by what it calls "facilities," and the "exchange of treasury notes for specie"; while, in truth, it has been fast contracting a public debt, in the midst of all its boasting, without daring to lay the plain and naked truth of the case before the people.

We protest against the conduct of the House of Representatives in the case of the New Jersey election. This is not a local, but a general question. In the union of the States, on whatever link the blow of injustice or usurpation falls, it is felt, and ought to be felt, through the whole chain. The cause of New Jersey is the cause of every State, and every State is therefore bound to vindicate it.

That the regular commission, or certificate of return, signed by the chief magistrate of the State, according to the provisions of law, entitles those who produce it to be sworn in as members

of Congress, to vote in the organization of the House, and to hold their seats until their right be disturbed by regular petition and proof, is a proposition of constitutional law, of such universal extent and universal acknowledgment, that it cannot be strengthened by argument or by analogy. There is nothing clearer, and nothing better settled. No legislative body could ever be organized without the adoption of this principle. Yet, in the case of the New Jersey members of Congress, it was entirely disregarded. And it is of awful portent, that on such a question, — a question in its nature strictly judicial, — the domination of party should lead men thus flagrantly to violate first principles. It is the first step that costs. After this open disregard of the elementary rules of law and justice, it should create no surprise, that, pending the labors of a committee especially appointed to ascertain who were duly elected, a set of men calling themselves representatives of the people of New Jersey, who had no certificates from the chief magistrate of the State or according to the laws of the State, were voted into their seats, under silence imposed by the previous question, and afterwards gave their votes for the passage of the sub-treasury law. We call most solemnly upon all who, with us, believe that these proceedings alike invade the rights of the States, and dishonor the cause of popular government and free institutions, to supply an efficient and decisive remedy, by the unsparing application of the elective franchise.

We protest against the plan of the administration respecting the training and disciplining of the militia. The President now admits it to be unconstitutional; and it is plainly so, on the face of it, for the training of the militia is by the Constitution expressly reserved to the States. If it were not unconstitutional, it would yet be unnecessary, burdensome, entailing enormous expenses, and placing dangerous powers in executive hands. It belongs to the prolific family of executive projects, and it is a consolation to find that at least one of its projects has been so scorched by public rebuke and reprobation, that no man raises his hand or opens his mouth in its favor.

It was during the progress of the late administration, and under the well-known auspices of the present chief magistrate, that the declaration was made in the Senate, that, in regard to public office, the spoils of victory belong to the conquerors; thus

boldly proclaiming, as the creed of the party, that political contests are rightfully struggles for office and emolument. We protest against doctrines which thus regard offices as created for the sake of incumbents, and stimulate the basest passions to the pursuit of high public trusts.

We protest against the repeated instances of disregarding judicial decisions by officers of government, and others enjoying its countenance; thus setting up executive interpretation over the solemn adjudications of courts and juries, and showing marked disrespect for the usual and constitutional interpretation and execution of the laws.

This misgovernment and maladministration would have been the more tolerable, if they had not been committed, in most instances, in direct contradiction to the warmest professions and the most solemn assurances. Promises of a better currency, for example, have ended in the destruction of all national and uniform currency; assurances of the strictest economy have been but preludes to the most wasteful excess; even the Florida war has been conducted under loud pretences of severe frugality; and the most open, unblushing, and notorious interference with State elections has been systematically practised by the paid agents of an administration, which, in the full freshness of its oath of office, declared that one of its leading objects should be, *to accomplish that task of reform which particularly required the correction of those abuses by which the patronage of the federal government was brought into conflict with the freedom of elections.*

In the teeth of this solemn assurance, it has been proved that United States officers have been assessed, in sums bearing proportion to the whole amount they receive from the treasury, for the purpose of supporting their partisans even in State and municipal elections.

Whatever, in short, has been most professed, has been least practised; and it seems to have been taken for granted, that the American people would be satisfied with pretence, and a full-toned assurance of patriotic purpose. The history of the last twelve years has been but the history of broken promises and disappointed hopes. At every successive period of this history, an enchanting, rose-colored futurity has been spread out before the people, especially in regard to the great concerns of revenue, finance, and currency. But these colors have faded, as the ob-

ject has been approached. Prospects of abundant revenue have resulted in the necessity of borrowing; the brilliant hopes of a better currency end in general derangement, stagnation, and distress; and while the whole country is roused to an unprecedented excitement by the pressure of the times, every state paper from the Cabinet at Washington comes forth fraught with congratulations on that happy state of things which the judicious policy of the administration is alleged to have brought about! Judged by the tone of these papers, every present movement of the people is quite unreasonable, and all attempts at change are only so many ungrateful returns for the wise and successful administration of public affairs!

There is yet another subject of complaint to which we feel bound to advert, by our veneration for the illustrious dead, by our respect for truth, by our love for the honor of our country, and by our own wounded pride as American citizens. We feel that the country has been dishonored, and we desire to free ourselves from all imputation of acquiescence in the parricidal act. The late President, in a communication to Congress, more than intimates that some of the earliest and most important measures of Washington's administration were the offspring of personal motives and private interests. His successor has repeated and extended this accusation, and given to it, we are compelled to say, a greater degree of offensiveness and grossness. No man, with an American heart in his bosom, can endure this without feeling the deepest humiliation, as well as the most burning scorn. The fame of Washington and his immediate associates is one of the richest treasures of the country. His is that name which an American may utter with pride in every part of the world, and which, wherever uttered, is shouted to the skies by the voices of all true lovers of human liberty. Imputations which assail his measures so rudely, while they are abominable violations of the truth of history, are an insult to the country, and an offence against the moral sentiments of civilized mankind. Miserable, miserable indeed, must be that cause which cannot support its party predominance, its ruinous schemes and senseless experiments, without thus attempting to poison the fountains of truth, and prove the government of our country disgracefully corrupt, even in its very cradle. Our hearts would sink within us, if we believed that such efforts could succeed; but they must be impotent. Neither the recent nor the present

President was born to cast a shade on the character of Washington or his associates. The destiny of both has been, rather, to illustrate, by contrast, that wisdom and those virtues which they have not imitated, and to hurl blows, which the affectionate veneration of American citizens, and the general justice of the civilized world, will render harmless to others, and powerful only in their recoil upon themselves. If this language be strong, so also is that feeling of indignation which has suggested it: and, on an occasion like this, we could not leave this consecrated spot without the consciousness of having omitted an indispensable duty, had we not thus given utterance to the fulness of our hearts, and marked with our severest rebuke, and most thorough reprobation and scorn, a laboured effort to fix a deep and enduring stain on the early history of the government.

Finally, on this spot, the fame of which began with our liberty, and can only end with it, in the presence of these multitudes, of the whole country, and of the world, we declare our conscientious convictions, that the present administration has proved itself incapable of conducting the public affairs of the nation in such a manner as shall preserve the Constitution, maintain the public liberty, and secure general prosperity. We declare, with the utmost sincerity, that we believe its main purpose to have been, to continue its own power, influence, and popularity; that to this end it has abandoned indispensable, but highly responsible, constitutional duties: that it has trifled with the great concerns of finance and currency: that it has used the most reprehensible means for influencing public opinion; that it has countenanced the application of public money to party purposes; that it endeavors to consolidate and strengthen party by every form of public patronage: that it laboriously seeks to conceal the truth from the people on subjects of great interest; that it has shown itself to be selfish in its ends, and corrupt in its means; and that, if it should be able to maintain itself in power through another term, there is the most imminent danger that it will plunge the country in still further difficulty, bring on still greater disorder and distress, and undermine at once the foundations of the public prosperity and the institutions of the country.

Men thus false to their own professions, false to the principles of the Constitution, false to the interests of the people, and false to the highest honor of their country, are unfit to be the rulers of this republic.

The people of the United States have a right to good government. They have a right to an honest and faithful exercise of all the powers of the Constitution, as understood and practised in the best days of the republic for the general good. They have an inalienable right to all the blessings of that *Liberty* which their fathers achieved, and all the benefits of that *Union* which their fathers established.

And standing here, this day, with the memory of those fathers fresh on our hearts, and with the fields of their glory and the monuments of their fame full in our view, with Bunker Hill beneath us, and Concord, and Lexington, and Dorchester Heights, and Faneuil Hall all around us, we here, as a part of the people, pledge ourselves to each other, and to our country, to spare no lawful and honorable efforts to vindicate and maintain these rights, and to remove from the high places of the nation men who have thus contemned and violated them.

And we earnestly and solemnly invoke all good men and true patriots throughout the Union, foregoing all consideration of party, and forgetting all distinction of State or section, to rally once more, as our fathers did in 1775, against the common oppressors of our country, and to unite with us in restoring our glorious Constitution to its true interpretation, its practical administration, and its just supremacy.

In such a cause, principles are every thing; individuals nothing. Yet we cannot forget that we have worthy, honest, capable candidates for the offices from which we hope to remove the present incumbents.

Those who desire a change, throughout the whole country, have agreed, with extraordinary unanimity, to support General William Henry Harrison for the office of President. We believe him to be an honest and faithful citizen, who has served his country successfully, in divers civil trusts; and we believe him a veteran soldier, whose honor and bravery cannot be questioned. We give him our unhesitating confidence; and in that confidence we shall support him, and the distinguished citizen of Virginia who has been nominated for the Vice-Presidency, with all our efforts and all our hearts, through the present contest; convinced that by their election the true spirit of the Constitution will be restored, the prosperity of the people revived, the stability of our free institutions reassured, and the blessings of union and liberty secured to ourselves and our posterity.

Speech in Wall Street

Speech in Wall Street*

I AM duly sensible, fellow-citizens, both of the honor and of the responsibility of the present occasion. An honor it certainly is to be requested to address a body of merchants such as I behold before me, as intelligent, as enterprising, and as respectable as any in the world. A responsible undertaking it is to address such an assembly, and on a subject which many of you understand scientifically and in its elements at least as well as I do, and with which most of you have more or less of practical acquaintance. The currency of a country is a subject always important, and in some measure complex; but it has become the great leading question of our time. I have not shrunk from the expression of my opinions, since I have been in public life, nor shall I now, especially since on this question another great political question seems likely to turn; namely, the question whether one administration is about to go out of power, and another administration to come into power. Under these circumstances, it becomes me to premise what I have now to say by remarking, in the first place, that I propose to speak for nobody but myself. My general opinions on the subject of the currency have been well known; and as it has now become highly probable that those who have opposed all that has recently been done by the government on that subject will be called on to propose some remedies of their own for the existing state of things, it is the more incumbent on me to notify all who hear me, that what I now say I say for myself alone; for in regard to the sentiments of the distinguished individual whom it is your purpose to support for the Presidency, I have no more authority

* A Speech delivered at the Merchants' Meeting in Wall Street, New York, on the 28th of September, 1840.

to speak than any of yourselves, nor any means of knowing his opinions more than is possessed by you, and by all the country.

I will, in the first place, state a few general propositions, which I believe to be founded on true principles of good, practical political economy, as understood in their application to the condition of a country like ours.

And first, I hold the opinion that a mixed currency, composed partly of gold and silver and partly of good paper, redeemable and steadily redeemed in specie on demand, is the most useful and convenient for such a country as we inhabit, and is sure to continue to be used, to a greater or less extent, in these United States; the idea of an exclusive metallic currency being either the mere fancy of theorists, or, what is probably nearer the truth, being employed as a means of popular delusion.

I believe, in the next place, that the management of a mixed currency, such as I have mentioned, has its difficulties, and requires considerable skill and care; and this position is as true in respect to England, the greatest commercial country of Europe, as it is of the United States. I believe, further, that there is danger of expansion and of contraction, both sudden in their recurrence, in the use of such a currency; yet I believe that where a currency altogether metallic exists, as it does in Cuba, and in countries where metallic coin is most in use, as in France, there are fluctuations in prices, there are disasters and commercial failures, occurring perhaps nearly as often, and being perhaps as bad in their character, as in countries where a well-regulated paper currency exists.

In the next place, I hold that the regulation of the currency, whether metallic or paper, — that a just and safe supervision over that which virtually performs the office of money, and constitutes the medium of exchange, whatever it may be, — necessarily pertains to government; that it is one of the necessary and indispensable prerogatives of government.

Every bank, as banks are now constituted in this country, performs two distinct offices or functions. First, it discounts bills or notes. This is merely the lending of money, and may be performed by corporations, by individuals, or by banks without circulation, acting as banks of discount merely. In this country our banks are all banks of circulation, issuing

paper with an express view to circulation. When such a bank discounts notes, it pays the amount of discount in its own bills, and thereby adds so much to the actual amount of circulation, every such operation being, by so much, an increase of the circulating medium of the country. Hence it is true, that, in the absence of all government control and supervision, the wisdom and discretion regulating the amount of money afloat at any time in the community are but the aggregate of the wisdom and discretion of all the banks collectively considered; each individual bank acting from the promptings of its own interest, without concert with others, and not from any sense of public duty. In my judgment, such a regulator, or such a mode of regulating the currency, and of deciding what shall be the amount of money at any time existing in the community, is unsafe and untrustworthy, and is one to which we never can look to guard us against those excessive expansions and contractions which have produced such injurious consequences. Hence arises my view of the duty of government to take the care and control of the issues of these local institutions, and thereby to guard the community against the evils of an excessive circulation. I am of opinion, that the government may establish such a control and supervision as shall accomplish these purposes in two ways; and first, by restraining the issues of the local banks. You all know, and from experience, perfectly well, that a general institution for the circulation of a currency, which shall be as good in one part of the country as in another, if it shall possess a competent capital and shall be empowered to act as the fiscal agent of the government, is capable of controlling excessive issues, and keeping the bank paper in circulation in a community within reasonable limits. Such an institution acts also beneficially by supplying a currency which is of general credit, and uniform in value throughout the country.

This brings us to the point. What we need, and what we must have, is some currency which shall be equally acceptable in the Gulf of Mexico, in the valley of the Mississippi, on the Canada frontier, on the Atlantic Ocean, and in every town, village, and hamlet of our extended land. The question is, how to get this. Now, it seems to me that this question is to be answered by a plain reference to the condition of the country, to the form of its government, and to the objects for which the

general government was constituted. Why is it that no State bank paper, however secure, under institutions however respectable, in cities however wealthy, and with a capital however ample, has ever succeeded, but has uniformly failed, to give a national character to the currency? The cause of this is obvious. We live under a government which makes us, in many important respects, one people, and which does this, and was intended to do it, especially in whatever relates to the commerce of the country. Yet the nation exists in twenty-six distinct and sovereign States, extending over a space as wide almost as the greatest empires of Europe. In this state of things, every man knows, and is bound to know, two governments; first, the government of his own State. If that State has established banks, he knows, and is bound to know, on what principles these banks have been established, whether they are safe as objects of credit, and whether the laws of their administration are wise. Generally speaking, these State institutions — I refer now more particularly to those in the central and the northern and eastern sections of the Union, because with these I am best acquainted — enjoy the confidence of the people of the several States where they exist. Their issues are in general well received, not only in the States where the banks are established, but frequently also in the neighboring States. Every citizen is also bound, in like manner, to know the laws of the general government, the security of the institutions it has founded, and their general character; and since this is a national subject, over which the general government acts as such, he regards its acts and provisions as of a national character. Every man looks to institutions founded by Congress as emanating from the national government, a government which he knows, and which, to a certain extent, he himself influences by the exercise of the elective franchise, and in which it is his duty, as a good citizen, to correct, so far as in his power, whatever may be amiss. He has confidence, therefore, in the national government, and in the institutions it sanctions, as in something of his own; but the case is very different when he is called to take the paper of banks chartered by a distant State, over which he has no control, with which he has little personal acquaintance, and of whose institutions he knows not whether they are well or ill founded, or well or ill administered.

In exemplification of this, if you take a note of one of the best banks in the city of New York, rich as this city is, and place upon it forty indorsements of the most substantial mercantile houses, and then carry that note to the frontier, and read it to the people there, such is the nature of man, and such is his habit of looking to the nation for that medium which is to circulate through the nation, that you cannot get that New York note, with all its indorsements, to circulate there as national money. Can I give a stronger proof of the truth of this assertion than is found in a fact which you all know? Your city banks pay specie; the banks of Philadelphia and the Bank of the United States do not pay specie, and their paper is consequently at a discount here of three, and I believe of five, per cent. But how is it on the frontier? I undertake to say that you may go to Arkansas, or Missouri, with a note of the specie-paying banks of New York, and with another of the non-specie-paying Bank of the United States, and the latter shall be preferred. And why? Because it is in the name of its national predecessor. There is an *odor of nationality* which hangs around it, and clings to it, and is long in being separated from it.

In the next place, my opinion is, that a currency emanating partly from a national authority as broad in its origin as the whole country, and partly from local banks organized as our banks now are, and issuing paper for local circulation, is a better currency for the whole people than ever before existed in the world. Each of these classes of institutions, and each of these kinds of currency, has its own proper use and value. I affirm that the banking institutions of New York and of New England are organized on better principles than the joint stock companies of Great Britain; and I hold that we are competent, with a tolerable intellect, and with an honest purpose, to establish a national institution which shall act with less fluctuation than is experienced in England under the Bank of England.

Now, Gentlemen, I do not at all mean to say that there is only one mode, or two modes, of accomplishing this great national object. I do not say that a national bank is the only means to effect it; but, in my judgment, it is indisputably true that the currency should, in some degree, or in some portion of it, be *nationalized* in its character. This is indispensable to the great ends of circulation and of business in these United States.

But I shall be asked (and it is a pertinent question), if there is to be a national institution, or if we are in any form to have national issues of bank paper, what security is there, or is there any security, that these national institutions shall not run to an excess in their issues of paper? Who is to guard the guardian? Who is to watch the sentinel? The last twenty years have been fruitful in experience on this subject, both in the United States and in England. In that time, the world has learnt much. I may say that we have learnt much; for our own experience has been our instructor; and I think that there are modes by which banking institutions may be so far restricted as to give us reasonable security against excessive issues.

From whatever source these institutions may emanate, the first security is to be found in entire publicity as to the amount of paper afloat. There is more in this than is sometimes supposed. It should be known to the whole community, from day to day, what is the actual amount of paper in circulation. When prices rise or fall, a merchant has a right to know whether the change of price springs from change in demand, or merely from change in the amount of money in circulation; and therefore the first duty of a banking institution is, to make it universally known, by a daily or a weekly publication, what amount of paper it has out. See what benefits would arise from such an arrangement, and that in a thousand ways. If the bank should thus make its issues public, those who control its affairs would be bound to respect public opinion, and the bank, while it controlled what is under it, would itself be controlled by something above it; and thus public opinion would be brought to regulate the regulator, and to watch the sentinel.

Then, again, if the government should act in this matter, what it does should rather be done in reference to the function of issue, in such an institution, than with a view to make it a money-getting concern; and that no temptation should lead the bank to excess, there ought to be a limit to the extent of its dividends; all receipts for discount beyond that point going, not into the private crib, but into the public treasury. Then there is another error, which has been common with the Bank of England. If you look at the monthly accounts which it has published of its affairs, it will at once appear that its directors seem to have judged of the condition of the institution by the amount

of its circulation compared with its assets, including securities as well as bullion. They look chiefly to the amount payable and the amount receivable. As a mere lender of money, this is all very well; but if the bank is to act in regulating the circulation, it is an incorrect mode of stating the account. Admitting the object to be to keep its paper redeemable, and to exercise a general regulation, the true point of examination would be to see what proportion exists between the outstanding paper and the inlying bullion. The bank may be very rich, but she may expect her resources from the payment of the securities she holds. This may be all very well, as a means to show that she is solvent; but it is not the inquiry that belongs to her, as the source and preserver of a sound circulating medium.

I know very well that there are objections to the fixing of a positive limit for circulation. But until such limit can safely be dispensed with, it may be best to make it positive. When an institution has acquired general confidence, and there is no danger of a sudden and extensive panic in relation to it, it is in the power of such an institution, in case local panics should occur, to relieve the community, by that adaptation of the amount of outstanding circulation which discreet men may be trusted to regulate. Still I am of opinion that there ought to be a fixed limit, from which the bank should never depart.

I have not said, nor do I mean to say, that one or the other mode of accomplishing this great and desirable object is indispensable; but I affirm that, in his communication to Congress vetoing the bill to renew the charter of the United States Bank, President Jackson did say that, if he were applied to, he could furnish a plan for a United States Bank which would be adequate to all the purposes of such an institution, and should yet be constitutional. Therefore the thing is practicable, provided we of this generation can accomplish that which President Jackson said he could accomplish.

Now, Gentlemen, I have only stated what I receive as general principles, which the experience of the world has established, on the subject of currency and a paper currency. But all we can say is, that it seems the existing administration will do nothing of all this which I have stated as necessary to be done. They have done nothing to nationalize the currency in any degree; and so long as the government holds to that determina-

tion, there never will be in this country a currency of uniform value. This brings me to this inquiry: — Is the administration settled on the ground it has repeatedly avowed, and has for three years adhered to in practice, never to give us this uniform currency? That is the question. The administration will not go back to the policy sanctioned by forty years of prosperity. It will not trust the State banks. It will do nothing; and it will do nothing on principle; for Mr. Van Buren holds that the Constitution gives Congress no power to do any thing in the matter. I said at the time this assertion was uttered, and I still say, that I am hardly able to express the astonishment I feel at what would seem the presumptuousness of such a position; because, from the very cradle of the government, from the very commencement of its existence, those men who made the Constitution, who recommended it to the people, who procured its adoption, and who then undertook its administration, all approved that policy which is thus pronounced unconstitutional. It was followed for forty years by every Congress, and by every President, and its constitutionality was affirmed and sanctioned by the highest judicial tribunals. And yet here a gentleman stands up, at half a century's distance, and, disregarding all this legislative, executive, and judicial authority, says, "I am wiser than all of them, and I aver there is no such power in the Constitution."

The President says, "The people have decided this." But where did they so decide, and when? Why, he says that General Jackson declared the bank to be unconstitutional, and then the people reëlected him; but I have told you what General Jackson did declare. He said that a national bank might be established which would not be unconstitutional, although he held the particular bank then in existence to be against the Constitution. Now, if the people reëlected him after this declaration, why is it not just as fair to infer that they did so because he uttered this opinion, — because he said that there might be a national bank, and the Constitution still be preserved inviolate? No, Gentlemen; the truth is, that General Jackson was reëlected, not *because* he vetoed the Bank of the United States, but *notwithstanding* he vetoed it. It was the general popularity of General Jackson, and that paramount ascendency by which he ruled the party that placed him in power, and made it bend

and bow to his own pleasure, that carried him again into office. To say that the constitutional power of creating a national bank and regulating the national currency was repudiated by the people, is a glaring instance of false reasoning and false philosophy. Nay, the President goes farther, and says he was himself against the bank, and the people elected *him* too for that reason. I do not say what actuated the people in his election; but this I will say, that if any man ever came into office by virtue and under power of will and testament, it is that same gentleman. I insist that no evidence can be produced that the American people have ever repudiated the doctrines of Washington, and condemned and rejected the decisions of their own highest judicial tribunals.

We must decide on these questions as men having a deep personal interest in them. Do you go to authority? Do you appeal to Madison? You may quote Mr. Madison's opinion from morning till noon, and from noon to night, on the longest day in summer, and you cannot get from the friends of the administration one particle of answer. I have again and again read, in my place in the Senate, Mr. Madison's doctrine, that it is the duty of government to establish a national currency. I have shown that Mr. Madison urges this with the utmost earnestness and solemnity. They say nothing against it, save that Mr. Van Buren, having expressed a different opinion, *got in* at the last election.

When the national bank was destroyed, or rather when its charter expired, and was not renewed, in consequence of the executive veto, what followed? I say that the government then put the entire business of this country, its commercial, its manufacturing, its shipping interest, its fisheries, — in a word, all that the people possessed, — on the tenterhooks of experiment; it put to the stretch every interest of the nation; it held them up, and tried curious devices upon them, just as if the institutions of our country were things not to be cherished and fostered with the most solicitous anxiety and care, but matters for political philosophers to try experiments upon. I need not remind you that General Jackson said he could give the country a better currency; that he took the national treasure from where it had been deposited by Congress, to place it in the State banks; and that Congress, by subsequent legislation, legalized the transfer,

under the assurance that it would work well for the country. Yet I may be permitted to remind you that there were some of us who from the first declared that these State banks never could perform the duties of a national institution; that the functions of such an institution were beyond their scope, without the range of their powers; that they were, after all, but small arms, and not artillery, and could not reach an object so distant. The State bank system exploded; but the administration did not expect it to explode. At that day, they no more looked to the sub-treasury scheme than they looked for an eclipse, and they did not expect an eclipse half as much as they do just now. When the United States Bank was overthrown, they turned, as the next expedient, to the State institutions; and they had full confidence in them, for confidence is a quality in which experimenters are seldom found wanting; but the expedient failed, — the banks exploded. And what then?

Why, in the speech delivered in this place, by one of the ablest advocates of the measures of the administration, Mr. Wright said, What could you expect? What could Mr. Van Buren do? He could not adopt a national bank, because he had declared himself opposed to it. He could not rely on the State banks, for they had crumbled to pieces. What, then, could he do, but recommend the sub-treasury? What does this show, but that the government, as I have said, had departed from the principles of the approved policy of forty years of national prosperity, and had put itself in such a situation that it could not aid the country in any way? Mr. Van Buren would not retract his opinion against the bank, although he could retract his opinion against the State bank deposit system fast enough; but he would not retract the position he had taken against the national bank. The State banks had failed him; and he was driven, as his only refuge, to the suggestion of withdrawing all care over the national currency from the national government, and confining the solicitude of government to itself alone. But how far did he carry this doctrine? Look at the draft of the sub-treasury bill. Does it contain a specie clause? No such thing! It is a mere regulator of the revenue on the principles of the resolution of 1816. But what happened next? This bill was like to fail in the Senate for want of votes. There was a certain division in that body, at the head of which stood

Mr. Calhoun, whose aid was indispensable to carry the measure, but who would not vote for it unless the *hard-money clause* should be inserted. It was inserted accordingly; and then the friends of the administration, for the first time, shouted in all quarters, "Hard money!" "Hard money!" "Hard money!"

By this cruel necessity, the government was driven to a measure which it had no more expected than you expect to see your houses on fire to-night. But such are the expedients, the miserable expedients, of a baffled and despairing administration, on which they have thrown themselves as a last resort, always hoping, and always deceived, and plunging deeper and deeper at every new effort.

I have said, and it may be proper enough, and involve no great self-complacency to say it, that there were some of us who never ceased to warn the government and the nation, that the deposit system must explode, as it has exploded. But what was our reward? What was the boon conferred upon us for thus apprising the administration of its danger? We were denounced as enemies to State banks, as opposed to State institutions, as anti-State-rights men, whom nothing would satisfy but the spectacle of a great national institution, riding over and treading down the institutions of the States.

But what happened? The whole State bank experiment, as I have said, utterly failed; and what did gentlemen of the administration do then? They instantly turned about, and, with the utmost bitterness of remark, reviled the banks which their experiment had crushed. They were vile, corrupt, faithless, treacherous institutions, leagued from the very beginning with the opposition, and not much better than British Whigs! And when we, who had opposed the placing of the national treasure in these banks, declared that they had failed only because they were applied to a purpose for which they never were calculated, and had perished in consequence of a rash and unwise experiment, we were instantly told, "You are bank aristocrats; you are leagued with a thousand corrupt banks, and are seeking, by the power of British gold, to destroy the purest administration that ever breathed the air of heaven!" Thus, when we said that State banks, though good for some purposes, were not good as a substitute for a national bank, we were denounced as the enemies of banks; but when we wished to shield

these same banks from misapplied censure, and protect them from being totally destroyed by acts of bankruptcy, then we were reviled as "bank aristocrats."

I ask you, Gentlemen, as merchants, what confidence can you place in such an administration? Do you see any thing that they are disposed to do to restore the times you once enjoyed? (Loud cries of "No!" "No!") I perceive that your opinion corresponds with my own, and that you cannot lend your support to men who turn their backs on the experience, the interests, and the institutions of their country, and who openly declare that they will not exercise the powers which have been conferred on them for the public good.

Now, Gentlemen, I will observe to you further, that it appears to me that this administration has treated the States, in reference to their own affairs, just as it has treated the State banks. It has first involved them in the evils of extravagance (if any extravagance exists), and has then abused them for the very thing to which its own course has strongly invited them. Commencing with the messages of Mr. Van Buren himself, and then looking at the reports of his Secretaries, and the resolutions and speeches of Mr. Benton and Mr. Grundy in the Senate, and at the outcry of the whole administration press, there appears to be a systematic attempt to depress the character and credit of the States. It is everywhere said, that "the States have been rash and extravagant"; "the States will yet have to repent of their railroads and canals, and projects of internal improvements." This is the burden of the President's message, of the reports of his Secretaries, and of the resolutions of his friends. Now, I seriously ask, Is not the tendency of such a course of measures virtually to affect the credit of the States that have outstanding bonds and obligations in the market?

Let us look into this matter a little. Let us see under what circumstances it was that the States were induced to contract these large debts which now embarrass them. And here let me call your attention to a few facts, dates, and figures. And first, Gentlemen, in your presence, I charge upon the administration of the general government those great expansions and those sudden contractions of paper money, which have so deranged our affairs. I propose to prove the charge; and with that view now proceed to lay before you facts, and dates, and

transactions, which must carry conviction to every honest and candid mind.

Let us go back to the year 1832, when it was perfectly settled by the veto of President Jackson, that the Bank of the United States would not be rechartered. Suppose we take a series of years by tens, and trace the history of the creation of State banks in this country. From 1820 to 1830, a period of ten years, there were created in the United States twenty-two new banks; and their creation added to the banking capital of the country but eight millions of dollars. During this period, the Bank of the United States was in full operation, and nobody entertained a doubt that it would be continued. How was it in the next ten years? From 1830 to 1840, the increase of banks, instead of twenty-two, as in the preceding ten years, was three hundred and forty-eight; and the increase of banking capital, instead of eight millions, amounted to two hundred and sixty-eight millions. Such has been the progress of bank expansion during the charming, the successful years of the experiment. But further, not only was there this great augmentation in the number and in the capital of the State banks, but when the extraordinary proceeding of the removal of the deposits in 1833 took place, it was declared by the government to be the duty of all its deposit banks to lend the public money freely to the commercial community. The Secretary of the Treasury, in his circular, issued, I think, in September, 1833, told these institutions expressly, that it was their duty to discount freely, and laid it down as a maxim, that the money of the government, between the periods of its collection and disbursement, ought to be at the service of the public. I remember, indeed, to have heard it said by the cashier of one of the banks in this street, that "he hardly knew what to do, for he was ordered to lend more of the public money than he could get security for." It is from this increase of banks, and this increase of issues, and from this alone, that the expansion so injurious to the country really sprang.

I know it may be said that there were expansions and contractions during the existence of the Bank of the United States. This I do not deny. The administration of that institution, I admit, was not always perfect; but I say, taking the whole period, of nearly half a century, during which such a bank ex-

isted, the country was freer from violent and sudden extremes of contraction and expansion than it has ever been since that time. Why will not a fair reasoner draw his conclusions from the entire history of his country as a whole? In his late speech from this place, Mr. Wright said he would not look back to the history of the first Bank of the United States; he said that under the second national bank there were great evils; but did he deny that, taking the whole forty years together, the country was less liable to fluctuations than it has since been? Not at all. Well, in the midst of this great expansion of banks and banking capital came the Specie Circular, whose tendency was to produce, and which did in fact produce, great and sudden contractions. This violent action and reaction, superinduced on a previous state of pecuniary expansion, is fairly chargeable to the administration itself, and is to be traced to the action of the government more than to all other causes.

But to return. How does it stand with respect to the States? Under what patronage, and at whose recommendation, did they contract the large and onerous debt of two hundred millions of dollars? Who induced this? Under what circumstances at home was it done? From 1820 to 1825, the aggregate of State debts amounted to twelve or thirteen millions. From 1825 to 1830, it stood at thirteen millions; but during the period from 1830 to 1835, it rose to forty millions. The effect of the increase of circulation did not begin fairly to develop itself in the country till 1834 and 1835. Then the State debts were augmented to forty millions; and between 1835 and 1840, they rose to one hundred millions.

It appears, from tables supposed to be accurately compiled, that the amount of stock issued by the several States, for each period of five years since 1820, is as follows, viz.: —

From	1820 – 1825,	somewhat	over	$12,000,000;
"	1825 – 1830,	"	"	13,000,000;
"	1830 – 1835,	"	"	40,000,000;
"	1835 – 1840,	"	"	109,000,000.

Of this amount of one hundred and nine millions, nearly the whole was issued during 1835 and 1836, and part of 1837; that is to say, in the most palmy time of the experiment.

So it appears that these "extravagant" State debts were con-

tracted when the currency was most redundant; when the States, in common with all the country, were urged, and goaded, and lashed on to borrow; and when all sorts of extravagant hopes and schemes were indulged among the people. To this very redundancy, thus caused by the government itself, in the vast multiplication of banks, and the free extension of loans, are to be traced these rash engagements of the States, for which they have been reviled in all quarters, from the head of the government down to its lowest agency. There were one hundred millions of debts created in 1835 and 1836, in the very midst of the glow and flow of the deposit system. It was in these very years, distinguished, as the administration say, for prudence and public prosperity, that the creation of the State debts kept pace with the bank creation and accommodation. The bank creation and accommodation kept pace with the government experiment, and the government experiment kept pace with the most rapid delusion which ever characterized any administration upon earth, or ever carried away an intelligent people.

And now I am on this subject, I must say a word or two on another topic, which it naturally suggests. One of the charges of the day is, that the opposition to the administration has come out with a project for the assumption of all these State debts by the general government. This charge was broached, as a subject of attack on the Whigs in the Senate, early in the last session. Let us look a little into facts. I have said that the general government encouraged the States to contract debts by making the currency plentiful; but they have also done this in another manner. It has been one of the favorite projects of the administration, since the removal of the deposits, to vest the surplus revenue, and the increased funds of the United States, in State bonds. I do not say this is an assumption of the State debts, but I do say that the general government did encourage the States to issue bonds, and did endeavor to give them all the credit it could.

In 1836, the project was taken up of distributing the surplus revenue among the States. This was not, indeed, a favorite measure of the leading men of the administration, but was carried rather against their wishes. In May of that year, it was moved by Mr. Wright of New York, then and now a prominent reader of the administration party in the Senate, that this sur-

plus should be vested in State stocks, and that whenever any further surplus might occur, it should be vested in the same manner. When the bill to regulate the State banks was under consideration, and a new section was proposed, distributing the forty millions of surplus among the States, Mr. Wright moved to strike out that provision, and to insert instead another clause, vesting the whole of the money in State bonds. Again, when the first sub-treasury bill was brought forward, the same gentleman tacked to it a provision, that the surplus amounts in the treasury should be vested in State bonds. Finally, there were other sums, which we held in trust, from the sale of Indian lands, for the payment of Indian annuities, as well as the Smithsonian legacy, which were also authorized to be invested in State bonds. I say, therefore, that so long as the contraction of those State debts was favorable to the administration, they were the foremost of all men in fostering State credits, and in encouraging the States to enlarge their liabilities. For my associate, Mr. Wright, declared "that he would undertake to say, that he was not afraid to recommend such an investment of the national funds, as the States would issue *as many bonds as the government might choose to buy!*"

But now, after all this, these same gentlemen, overreaching the whole intervening period, and going back to the beginning, reproach and criminate the States, from the very outset, for contracting the engagements to which the government itself incited them. I do not say that this was an assumption of the State debts, but it certainly was holding them up to Europe and the world as worthy of confidence, so long as it suited the purposes of the administration so to do. And very pretty purposes it would have answered, in view of the coming election, had they succeeded in their object, and the Secretary of the Treasury been vested with unlimited discretion to purchase State bonds at his pleasure. Suppose such a power now existed, and Mr. Woodbury, conscientious and scrupulous as he is known to be, were asked by us of Massachusetts, for instance, or had lately been asked by our good sister of Maine, to invest money in State bonds; how do you think the money would have been applied? No doubt it would have been given freely to the *patriotic* States, but as carefully withheld from those not deemed worthy of that title.

For this declaration, that the Whigs in Congress are in favor of the assumption of the State debts by the general government, there exists not one particle of proof, nor the least possible foundation. I do not myself know a single man in Congress, who holds the opinion that the general government has any more right to pay the debts of a State, than it has to pay the debts of a private individual. Congress might as well undertake to pay the debts of John Jacob Astor, as of the State of New York. I exempt, however, from these remarks, the distribution among the States of the proceeds of the public lands, and their application to pay the debts of the States, should the States choose so to apply the money. But I say there is no foundation whatever for such a plan of assumption as Mr. Benton and Mr. Grundy have so zealously declaimed against in the United States Senate.

You have all heard in the public papers, (and it is one of the most despicable of all the inventions of the enemy,) that transactions took place, in which I had a part, the object of which was to persuade Congress to assume the State obligations, and that I went to England for the worthy purpose of furthering such a design. Now, as I am among you this day as among my friends, I will tell you all about it. I left this country in May, 1839. At that time I had neither read nor heard from living man of any such design. I went to England, and I must be permitted to say that it was a most gloomy time, so far as American securities in general, and the State debts in particular, were concerned. But I declare to you on my honor, that no European banker or foreign holder of State securities ever suggested to me, in the remotest manner, the least notion of the assumption of the State debts by the general government. Once, indeed, I did hear the idea started by an American citizen; but I immediately told him that such a thing was wholly unconstitutional, and never could be effected, unless the people should adopt a new constitution. It was quite natural that I should be applied to in reference to the State debts. The State to which I belong had sent out some stock to England to be sold, and so, I believe, had the State of New York. We heard, continually, the most gloomy accounts from the United States; and, in fact, this very thing was, to use a common expression, a great damper to my enjoyment while abroad. People frequently

applied to me to know what security there was, that the American debts would be finally paid, and the interest, in the mean time, regularly discharged. I told them they might rely on the plighted faith of the States, and their ability to redeem their obligations. Nobody asked me whether there could be a United States guaranty to that effect, nor did I suggest such an idea to any one. Gentlemen came to me to ask about the Massachusetts bonds. They liked the offer of five per cent. interest very much, as this was high for an English capitalist; but they wanted to know what assurance I could give that the investment would be a safe one. I went to my trunk, and took out an abstract of the official return of the amount of the productive labor of Massachusetts. I put this into the hand of one of those inquirers, and told him to take it home and study it. He did so, and in two days returned, and invested forty thousand pounds sterling in Massachusetts stock. Others came, and made similar inquiries as to New York securities. I gave them a copy of the very able and admirable report made by your townsman, Mr. Ruggles, in 1838, and they came back satisfied. But to none did I suggest, or in the remotest manner hint, that they could look to the United States to secure the debt. I endeavored to uphold the credit of all the States. I remembered that they were all my countrymen, and I stated facts in relation to each as favorably as truth would allow. And what happened then? Gentlemen, it is fit that you should know that there exists a certain *clique* in London, who are animated by an inextinguishable hate of American credit. You may set it down as a fact, that it is their daily, their incessant vocation, to endeavor to impair the credit of every one of the States, and to represent the purchase of their bonds as an unwise and dangerous investment of money. On this subject their ferocity knows no mitigation; it is deaf to all justice, and proof against all reason. The more you show them it is wrong, the more tenacity of purpose do they exhibit. That part of the public press over which they have control is furnished, I am ashamed to say, with matter drawn from publications which originate in this city, and the object of which is to prove that State bonds are so much waste paper, the State having no right to issue any such obligations, and their holders being, therefore, utterly destitute of any security. And these miserable and contemptible speculations are

put into the papers of the largest circulation in Europe, and enforced by all the aid they can derive from editorial sanction. It was under circumstances like these that a large banking-house in London put to me, as a lawyer, the professional question, whether the States were empowered to issue evidences of debt payable by the State. I answered that, for this purpose, they were as completely sovereign as any State in Europe; that they had a public faith to pledge, and did pledge it. This entire correspondence was published (though you might as well get any administration editor in this country to take hold of a pair of hot tongs as to insert it in his columns), in the face of those who have been shouting in all quarters, that I had a personal agency in attempting to bring about an assumption of State debts by the general government.

It so happened, that, in the latter part of October, the house of Barings issued a circular to foreign houses on this subject, which circular I never saw till I returned to America. In this paper they speak of such an assumption or guaranty; but as it went to foreign houses, I never saw nor heard of it till last December, when I also heard of the proceedings of Mr. Benton. But I here wish again to repeat, that, during the whole time I was in Europe, no English banker or foreign bondholder ever suggested an idea of such an assumption. The first I heard of it was from an American citizen there, and not again till my return to this country. I have said that, owing to the bad news which was constantly received from this country, the pleasure of my visit was much diminished. I will now say, that during the whole time of my absence, I had the lowest hopes, as to the political state of the country, which I ever indulged. I saw the fatal workings of the experiment, and I saw that nothing wiser or better was in the mind of the administration. I knew that a vast majority of my countrymen were opposed to the existing policy, but I did not see them sufficiently roused, nor had I confidence that they would ever come to that cordial union in relation to any one candidate for the Presidency, which would enable them, as a party, to take the field with any rational hope of success.

Such were the gloomy feelings which possessed my mind when I first learned the result of the Harrisburg Convention. But when I saw a nomination which, though unwelcome at first

to many, I thought the best that could possibly have been made, and learned that it was fast gaining the approbation of all who thought with me; and above all, when I beheld the warm enthusiasm and the heartfelt union which soon animated their ranks and concentrated their movements, I then began to entertain a confidence that the hour of deliverance was at hand, and that my long-suffering country would yet relieve herself from the disastrous condition to which she had been reduced.

I hope, Gentlemen, you will not be alarmed, if I take from my notes one more paper. I will detain you but a few moments in briefly expressing the opinions I entertain in regard to the sub-treasury. It appears to me to be a scheme entirely new to our history, and foreign to our habits, and to be the last of a series of baffled experiments, into which the representatives of the people have been lashed and driven by the continued exercise of executive power, through four mortal sessions of Congress.

I will say a word or two in relation to the system, under the various aspects in which its friends have supported it. What are the arguments in its favor? The leading argument was that of safety to the government. This was a plan to keep the public money where rogues could not run away with it. Now I think there is a way to prevent that, which would be much more effectual; and that is, not to trust rogues with the keeping of the public money. But as to the notion of vaults better and more secure than those of the banks, is it not the most ridiculous of all humbugs? I do not know in which of the bank vaults around me the receiver-general keeps his funds. If they are in a vault different from that which belongs to the bank, I will venture to say it is no better and no safer. It is said, however, that by this means government is to keep its own money. What does this mean? Who is that government? Who is that individual "I," who is to keep our money in his own pocket? Is not government a mere collection of agencies? Is not every dollar it possesses placed in trust with somebody? It may be put in vaults under a key, but the key is given to somebody to keep. Government is not a person with pockets.

The only question is, whether the government agents under the sub-treasury are any safer than the government agents be-

fore it was adopted? Mr. Wright, indeed, has assured us, that the agents under the sub-treasury are made responsible to the people. But how? In what respect? The receiver-general gives bonds; but how is he more responsible on that account than the collector in another street, who, like him, receives the public money, and like him gives bonds for its safe-keeping? It is just the same thing. One of these officers is just as far from the people, and just as near to the people, as the other. How, then, is the receiver-general more directly responsible? There is not a particle of truth or reason in the whole matter. If the vaults are not better, is the security better? I have no manner of doubt that the receiver-general in this city is a highly respectable man; but where is the proof that the government money is any safer in his vault than in the bank where he has his office? Suppose Mr. Allen had a private office of his own, at a distance from the bank, and should give the same bonds he now does for the safe-keeping of all moneys intrusted to him; how many of you would deposit your private funds in his office, rather than in a bank having half a million or a million of dollars capital, under the government of directors whose own fortunes were deposited in its vaults? Try the experiment, and see how many would resort to Mr. Allen, and how many to the banks.

So far from being safer, I maintain, on the contrary, that this sub-treasury scheme jeopards the public money, because it multiplies the hands through which it is to pass, and thereby multiplies the chances of corruption or of loss. Your collector, Mr. Hoyt, receives the money on duty bonds. He holds it subject to the draft or order of the Secretary of the Treasury, or else is to pay it over to Mr. Allen. If Mr. Hoyt were dishonest, might he not have shared the money before the receiver-general could get at it? The scheme doubles the chances of loss, by doubling the hands which are to keep the money.

But this scheme is to encourage the circulation of specie. I certainly shall not detain you on a matter with which you are more familiar than I am; but let me ask you a few questions. By one clause of the sub-treasury law, one fourth of all the duties bonded is to be paid in specie, and the residue according to the resolution of 1816. Now I want to know one thing: if one of you has a custom-house bond to pay, you go to the collector with a certified check, purporting to be payable *in specie*, for one

fourth of the amount, and another check, in common form, for the other three fourths. Does not the collector receive these checks? That is the question I ask you. (Loud cries of "Yes! yes!" "He does! he does!") Well, then, is not all that part of the law which requires the payment of one fourth in specie a mere sham? If you go to him with a draft and demand specie, he will, no doubt, give it to you if you request it; but if not, he gives you good notes. Where, then, is all this marching and countermarching of specie, which was to gladden our eyes? Is it not all humbug? What does the collector do with the money when he gets it? Does he not deposit it in a bank of a very unsavory name? I do not certainly know, but I believe he deposits it in the Bank of the United States. He afterwards pays it over to the receiver-general, and gives him all the specie he wants; and yet, after all, there is no general use of specie in the matter.

They speak about a divorce between bank and state; and what does it amount to? I ask you, Is not the great amount of government funds at this moment in safe keeping in some bank? I believe it is. Then there is no separation. The government gives the money to individuals to keep, and they, like sensible men, put it into bank. Is this separation? If any change is made in the connection, it is to render it more close; and, like other illicit connections, the closer it is, the more secret it is kept.

It is called the "Independent Treasury," and some of its friends have called it "a second Declaration of Independence." Independence! how? of what? It is dependent on individuals, who immediately go to the bank; and is it to be tolerated that there should be this outcry about the use of specie, when here, in the heart of the commercial community, you see and know that there is no such thing?

But though at present this is all sham, yet that power to demand specie which the law contains, when its requirements shall cover the whole revenue of the government, and when that revenue shall be large, may, in its exercise, become a most dangerous instrument. When government shall have in the banks of this city from twelve to fifteen millions of dollars on deposit, as it has had, it will be in the power of the government to break down, at its pleasure, one, if not all, of these institutions. And

when you go to the West, where the money is received for the public lands, every specie-paying bank in the country may, at the mere pleasure of the government, be compelled to shut up its doors.

But this independent treasury is to be independent of the banks! Well, if the sub-treasury law is to be called the second Declaration of Independence, then there is a third Declaration of Independence, and that is the treasury-note law. How marvellously free does that make us of banks! While two millions of these notes, bearing interest, are deposited there, — and there, — and there, — in all these banks around me! Deposited? How deposited? They are sold. And how sold? They are deposited in these banks, carrying interest, while the bank gives the government authority to draw for money when needed. Now, I say the bank may make, not a very unreasonable, but a very reasonable, amount by the interest in these notes, before it is called on to pay out any of its own money. One of these accounts between bank and government was examined by a friend of mine; I had not myself time to look at it. The bank received treasury-notes bearing interest; it passed these to the credit of government, at the nominal amount; the government was then to draw for money as it wanted it; and, on that single transaction, the bank realized between eighty and a hundred thousand dollars in interest. Now, this is what I call a third Declaration of Independence! You know, by the Secretary's report, that the government has already issued nearly the whole of the five millions authorized by Congress. Two millions lie in the banks, drawing interest, the banks paying government drafts as they come in. And this is setting up for independence of the banks!

Again, the fashion now is, since Mr. Calhoun has forced the administration to insert in the law the specie clause, for government to discredit the use of bank paper whenever it can. That is the general tone of the government communications. They avow such to be their object, and I believe them. But who can tell the consequence of discrediting bank paper, if our revenues should ever again become what they have been in times past? It is a power by which government can break the solvent banks, but can never make the insolvent return to their duty.

But then, it is said, all this cannot be any great matter, be-

cause Mr. Wright tells us, that, in ordinary times, five millions of dollars will perform all the operations of receipt and expenditure. Now, that proposition depends upon Mr. Wright's estimate of what the expenditure will be. Does he expect to reduce it to the standard of Mr. Adams's administration, once denounced as so extravagant? Does he expect to reduce the thirty-nine millions to thirteen millions? or will he go below that? He does not tell us. For my own part, I believe five or five and a half millions would be a moiety of the average amount of specie in all the banks in the city. You can judge for yourselves what must be the effect of withdrawing one half of all the specie in these banks, and of locking it up in the sub-treasury vaults.

But how does all this stand with Mr. Wright's main argument? He says that the great object to be effected by the sub-treasury law is to prevent fluctuations, by preventing the banks from discounting upon the public money. But if five millions of dollars only are needed for the ordinary treasury operations, can such a sum as this have produced all the fluctuations in the commercial community? Surely not. In his printed speech, he says that the chief practical difference produced by the law is, that the money is now kept by Mr. Allen, which used to be kept by the Bank of America. But is that all? What, then, becomes of the specie clause? I suppose he knows that was all a sham.

Gentlemen, I will not detain you longer on the practical operation of this sub-treasury scheme. So far as relates to the receipts and disbursements of the public treasure, you know better than I. A great part of these operations take place in your own city. But permit me now to go, for a moment, into the political objection to this sub-treasury scheme; I mean *its utter omission of all concern with the general currency of the country.* This objection is cardinal and decisive. It is this which has roused the country, and which is to decide the fate of the present administration. But the question is so general, it has so long been before the country, and so frequently discussed in all quarters, that I will not farther extend my remarks in regard to it. I believe that the mind of the people is now thoroughly awakened, and that the day rapidly approaches when their final judgment will be pronounced.

There is yet one topic on which I must detain you for a moment, and I will then relieve you. We have the good fortune, under the blessing of a benign Providence, to live in a country which we are proud of for many things, — for its independence, for its public liberty, for its free institutions, for its public spirit, for its enlightened patriotism. But we are proud also, — and they are among the things we should be the most proud of, — we are proud of its public justice, of its sound faith, of its substantially correct morals in the administration of the government, and the general conduct of the country, since she took her place among the nations of the world. But among the events which most threaten our character and standing, and which are so greatly at war with the moral principles that have hitherto distinguished us, are certain sentiments which have been broached among us, and, I am sorry to say, have more supporters than they ought, because they strike at the very foundation of the social system. I do not speak especially of those which have been promulgated by some persons in my own State, but of others which go yet deeper into our political condition. I refer to the doctrine, that one generation of men, acting under the Constitution, cannot bind another generation who are to be their successors; on which ground it is held, among other things, that State bonds are not obligatory. What! one generation cannot bind another? Where is the line of separation? It changes hourly. The American community to-day is not the same with the American community to-morrow. The community in which I began this day to address you was not the same as it is at this moment.

How abhorrent is such a doctrine to those great truths, which teach us that, though individuals flourish and decay, states are immortal, that political communities are ever young, ever green, ever flourishing, ever identical! The individuals who compose them may change, as the atoms of our bodies change, but the political community still exists in its aggregate capacity, as our bodies still exist in their natural capacity; with this only difference, that we know that our natural frames must soon dissolve, and return to their original dust; but for our country, she yet lives, she ever dwells in our hearts, and it will, even at the last solemn moment, go up as our final aspiration to Heaven, that she may be immortal.

Whig Convention at Richmond

Whig Convention at Richmond*

VIRGINIANS, — The wisdom of our fathers has established for us a Constitution of government which enables me to appear before you to-day, and to address you as *my fellow-citizens;* and half a century of experience has shown how favorable to our common interest, how conducive to our common renown and glory, is that Constitution by which we are thus united. I desire to pay due honor to those illustrious men who made us, the children of those who fell at Bunker Hill and Yorktown, members of the same political family, bound together by the same common destiny, and awaiting the same common prosperity, or common adversity, in all time to come. It is the extraordinary nature of the times, together with a long-cherished desire to visit Virginia, which has procured me the pleasure I enjoy of being in the midst of you all to-day. I have come more for the purpose of seeing and hearing you than of speaking to you myself. I have come to mingle myself among you, to listen to the words of your wise and patriotic men, that I may improve my own patriotic feeling by communication with the chivalrous spirits of this Ancient Dominion. But, inasmuch as there are, or may be, some questions of national policy, or of constitutional power, on which you and I differ, there are some amiable persons who are so very considerate of your reputation, and of my reputation, as to signify that they esteem it a great breach of propriety that you should invite me to come here, or that I should accept your invitation. Let us hope that these amiable persons will allay their fears.

If there be any question or questions on which you and I differ in opinion, those questions are not to be the topics of dis-

* A Speech delivered on the 5th of October, 1840, in the Capitol Square at Richmond, Virginia, before the Whig Convention.

cussion to-day. No! We are not quite soft enough for that. While in the presence of a common enemy, who is armed to the teeth against us both, and putting forth as many hands as Briareus to destroy what we think it most important to preserve, does he imagine that, at such a moment, we shall be carrying on our family controversies? that we are going to give ourselves those blows which are due to him? No! Regarding him as the enemy of our country, we mean to pursue him till we bring him to capitulation or to flight; and when we have done that, if there are any differences of opinion among us, we will try to settle them ourselves, without his advice or assistance; and we will settle them in a spirit of conciliation and mutual kindness. If we do differ in any of our views, we must settle that difference, not in a spirit of exasperation, but with moderation, with forbearance, in a temper of amity and brotherhood.

It is an era in my life to find myself on the soil of Virginia addressing such an assemblage as is now before me; I feel it to be such; I deeply feel the responsibility of the part which has this day been thrown upon me. But, although it is the first time I have addressed an assembly of my fellow-citizens upon the soil of Virginia, I hope I am not altogether unacquainted with the history, character, and sentiments of this venerable State. The topics which are now agitating the country, and which have brought us all here to-day, have no relation whatever with those on which I differ from the opinions she has ever entertained. The grievances and the misgovernment which have roused the country pertain to that class of subjects which especially and peculiarly belong to Virginia, and have from the very beginning of our history. I know something of the community amidst which I stand, its distinguished and ardent attachment to civil liberty, and its habits of political disquisition. I know that the landholders of Virginia are competent, from their education and their leisure, to discuss political questions in their elements, and to look at government in its tendencies, as well as in the measures it may at present pursue. There s a sleepless suspicion, a vigilant jealousy of power, especially of executive power, which for three quarters of a century has marked the character of the people of the Old Dominion; and if I have any right conception of the evils of the time, or of the true objection to the measures of the present administration, it

is, that they are of such a kind as to expose them, in an especial manner, to that sleepless jealousy, that stern republican scrutiny, that acute and astute inspection, which distinguish the present as they have distinguished all preceding generations of men in this ancient Commonwealth. Allowing this to be so, let me present to you my own views of the present aspect of our public affairs.

In my opinion, a decisive majority of all the people of the United States has been, for several years past, opposed to the policy of the existing administration. I shall assume this in what I have further to say, because I believe it to be true; and I believe that events are on the wing, and will soon take place, which will proclaim the truth of that position, and will show a majority of three fourths of the votes of the electoral colleges in favor of a CHANGE OF MEN. Taking this, for the present, as the true state of political feeling and opinion, I next call your attention to the very extraordinary excitement, agitation, and I had almost said commotion, which mark the present moment throughout every part of the land. Why are these vast assemblages everywhere congregated? Why, for example, am I here, five hundred miles from my own place of residence, to address such an assembly of Virginians on political subjects? And why does every day, in every State, witness something of a similar kind? Has this ever been seen before? Certainly not in our time, and once only in the time of our fathers. There are some present here who witnessed, and there are others who have learned from the lips of their parents, the state of feeling which existed in 1774 and 1775, before the resort was made to arms in order to effect the objects of the Revolution. I speak now of the time when Patrick Henry, standing, as we now do, in the open air was addressing the Virginians of that day, while at the same moment James Otis and his associates were making the same rousing appeal to the people of Massachusetts. From that time to this there has been nothing in any degree resembling what we now behold. This general earnestness, this universal concern of all men in relation to public affairs, is now witnessed for the first time since the Revolution. Do not men abandon their fields in the midst of seed-time or of harvest, do they not leave their various occupations, as you have now done, to attend to matters which they deem more important? And is it not so

through all classes of our citizens throughout the whole land? Now, the important question I wish to put, and I put it as a question fit for the mind of the statesmen of Virginia, — I propose it, with all respect, to the deep deliberation and reflection of every patriotic man throughout the country, — is this: If it be true that a majority of the people of the United States have, for some years, been opposed in sentiment to the policy of the present administration, WHY IS IT NECESSARY that these extraordinary efforts should be put forth to turn that administration ou of power, and to put better men in their places? We inhabit a free country; — every office of public trust is in our own hands, at the disposal of the people's own suffrages; all public concerns are controlled and managed by them, at their own pleasure; and the reliance has always been on the ballot-box, as an effectual means to keep the government at all times in conformity with the public will. How, then, has it happened, that, with all this, such extraordinary efforts have been necessary to put out a particular administration? Why has it not been done by the silent power of the elective franchise? Why has not the government been changed both in its policy and in the men who administer it? I desire from the free, the thinking men of Virginia, an answer to that question. When the elections are everywhere showing that a large majority of the people are opposed in sentiment to the existing administration, I desire them to tell me how that administration has held its place and pursued its own peculiar system of measures so long?

My answer to my own question is this: In my judgment, it has come to be true, in the actual working of our system of government, that the executive power has increased its influence and its patronage to such a degree as to counteract the will of a majority of the people, and has continued to do so until that majority has not only become very large, but till it has united in its objects and in its candidate, and, by these strenuous and extraordinary efforts, is enabled to turn the administration out of power. I believe that the patronage of the executive in our government has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. I believe that it does enable the incumbents to resist the public will, until the country is roused to a high and simultaneous effort, and the imperative mandate of the public voice dismisses the unfaithful servants from their places. The citadel of the administration can only be carried by general storm.

Now, I ask, can it be supposed that this government can go on long in a course of successful operation, if no change can be produced without such an effort as that in which the people of this country are now engaged? I put it to the old-fashioned republicans of Virginia. I ask them, whether it can be supposed that this free republican government of ours can last for half a century longer, if its administration cannot be changed without such an excitement, I may say such a civil revolution, as is now in progress, and, I trust, is near its completion?

I present this case as the greatest and strongest of all proofs that executive power in this country has increased, and is become dangerous to liberty.

If this be so, then I ask, What are the causes which have given and have augmented this force of executive power? The disciples of the ancient school of Virginia long entertained the opinion, that there was great danger of encroachment by the general government on the just rights of the States; but they were also alarmed at the possibility of an undue augmentation of the executive power. It becomes us, at a crisis like the present, to recur to first principles, — to go back to our early history, and to see how the question actually stands.

You all well know that, in the formation of a constitution for the government of this country, the great difficulty its framers encountered was with regard to the executive power. It was easy to establish a House of Representatives, and a second branch of the government in the form of a Senate, for it was a very obvious principle, that the States should be represented in one House of Congress as the people were represented in the other. But the great and perplexing question was, how to limit and regulate the executive power in such a manner, that, while it should be sufficiently strong and effective for the purposes of government, it should not be able to endanger civil liberty. Our fathers had seen and felt the inconvenience, during the Revolutionary war, of a weak executive in government. The country had suffered much from that cause. There was no unity of purpose or efficiency of action in its executive power. As the country had just emerged from one war, and might be plunged into another, they were looking intently to such a constitution as should secure an efficient executive. Perhaps it remains to be seen whether, in this respect, they had not better have given

less power to this branch, and taken all the inconvenience arising from the want of it, rather than have hazarded the granting of so much as might prove dangerous, not only to the other departments of government, but to the safety and freedom of the country at large.

In the first place, it is the executive which confers all the favors of a government. It has the patronage in its hands, and if we look carefully at the proceedings of the past and present administrations, we shall see that in the course of things, and to answer the purposes of men, this patronage has greatly increased. We shall find that the expenditures for office have been augmented. We shall find that this is true of the civil and diplomatic departments; we shall find it is true of all the departments; of the post-office, and especially of the commercial department. Thus, to take an instance from one of our great commercial cities, in the custom-house at New York, the number of officers has, in twelve years, increased threefold, and the whole expense, of course, in the same proportion.

Then there is the power of removal, a power which, in some instances, has been exercised most remorselessly. By whatever party it is wielded, unless it be called for by the actual exigencies of the public service, Virginia, more than any State of the Union, has ever rejected, disowned, disavowed, the practice of removal for opinion's sake. I do honor to Virginia in this respect. That power has been far less practised in Virginia than in certain States where the spoils doctrine is known to be more popular. But this power of removal, sanctioned as it is by time, does exist, and I have seen it exercised, in every part of the country where public opinion tolerated it, with a most unsparing hand.

I will now say, however, that which I admit to be very presumptuous, because it is said notwithstanding the illustrious authority of one of the greatest of your great men, — a man better acquainted with the Constitution of the United States than any other man; a man who saw it in its cradle, who held it in his arms, as one may say, in its infancy, who presented and recommended it to the American people, and who saw it adopted very much under the force of his own reasoning and the weight of his own reputation, who lived long enough to see it prosper-

ous, to enjoy its highest honors, and who at last went down to the grave beneath ten thousand blessings, for which, morning and evening, he had thanked God; I mean James Madison. Yet even from this great and good man, whom I hold to be chief among the just interpreters of the Constitution, I am constrained, however presumptuous it may be considered, to differ in relation to one of his interpretations of that instrument. I refer to the opinion expressed by him, that the power of removal from office does exist in the Constitution as an independent power in the hands of the President, without the consent of the Senate. I wish he had taken a different view of it. I do not say that he was wrong; that in me would be too hazardous. I advert to this here, to show that I am not now for the first time preaching against the danger of an increase of executive power; for when the subject was in discussion before Congress, in 1835, I expressed there the same opinions which I have now uttered, and which have been only the more confirmed by recent experience. The power of removal places the hopes and fears, the living, the daily bread of men, at the disposal of the executive, and thereby produces a vast mass of executive influence and control. Then, again, from the very nature of things, the executive power acts constantly; it is always in being, always in the citadel and on the look-out; and it has, besides, entire unity of purpose. They who are in have but one object, which is to keep all others out; while those who are not in office, and who desire a change, have a variety of different objects, as they are to be found in different parts of the country. One complains of one thing, another of another; and, ordinarily, there is no strict unity of object, nor agreement on candidates, nor concert of action; and therefore it is that those wielding power within the fortress are able to keep the others out, though they may be more numerous. Hence we have seen an administration, though in a minority, yet, by the continued exercise of power, able to bring over a majority of the people's representatives to the support of such a measure as the sub-treasury, which, when it was first proposed, received but little favor in any part of the country.

Again; though it may appear comparatively inconsiderable, yet, when we are looking at the means by which the executive power has risen to its present threatening height, we must not overlook the power of, I will not say a pensioned, but of a patron-

ized press. Of all things in a popular government, a *government press* is the most to be dreaded. The press furnishes the only usual means of public address; and if government, by supporting, comes to control it, then they take to themselves, at the public expense, the great channel of all communication with the people. Unless France be an exception, where the minister regularly demands so many thousand francs for the management of the public press, I know of no government in the world where the press is avowedly patronized to the same extent as it is in this country. Have not you, men of Virginia, been mortified to witness the importance which is attached, at Washington, to the election of a public printer? to observe the great anxiety and solicitude which even your own friends have been obliged to exercise to keep that appointment out of the hands of executive power? One of the first things which, in my opinion ought to be done, is, when a new administration shall come in, to separate the government press from the politics of the country. I don't want the government printer to preach politics to the people; beause I know beforehand what politics he will preach; it will all be one *Io triumphe* from the beginning of the first page to the end of the last paragraph. I am for cutting off this power from the executive. Give the people fair play. I say, *give the people fair play.* If they think the govern ment is in error, or that better men may be found to administer it, give them a chance to turn the present men out, and put better men in; but don't let them be compelled to give their money to pay a man to persuade them not to change the government.

Well, there are still other modes by which executive power is established and confirmed. The first thing it seeks to do is to draw strict lines of party distinction, and then to appeal to the party feelings of men. This is a topic which might lead me very far into an inquiry as to the causes which have overturned all popular governments. It is the nature of men to be credulous and confiding toward their friends. If there exists in the country a powerful party, and if the head of that party be the head of the government, and, avowing himself the head of that party, gives thanks for the public honors he has received, not to the country, but to his party, then we can see the causes in operation, which, according to the well-known character and tendencies of man, lead us to give undue trust and confidence to

party favorites. Why, Gentlemen, kings and queens of old, and probably in modern times, have had their favorites, and they have placed unbounded trust in them. Well, there are sometimes among the people persons who are no wiser than kings and queens, who have favorites also, and give to those favorites the same blind trust and confidence. Hence it is very difficult, nay, sometimes impossible, to convince a party that the man at its head exercises an undue amount of power. They say, "He is our friend; the more power he wields, the better for us, because he will wield it for our benefit." There are two sorts of republicans in the world: one is a very good sort; the other, I think, quite indifferent. The latter care not what power persons in office possess, if they have the election of those persons. They are quite willing their favorites should exercise all power, and are perfectly content with the tendencies of government to an elective despotism, if *they* may choose the man at the head of it, and more especially if they have a chance of being chosen themselves. That is one sort of republicanism. But that is not our American liberty; that is not the republicanism of the United States, and especially of the State of Virginia. Virginians do not rush out into that extravagant confidence in men; they are for restraining power by law; they are for hedging in and strictly guarding all who exercise it. They look upon all who are in office as limited agents, and will not repose too much trust in any. That is American republicanism. What was it that Thomas Jefferson said with so much emphasis? "Have we found angels in the form of men to govern us?" However it might have been then, we of this day may answer, No! No! We have found them at least like others, "a little *lower* than the angels." In the same spirit he has said, an elective despotism is not the government we fought for. And that is true. Our fathers fought for a limited government, a government hedged all round with securities, or, as I heard an eminent son of Virginia say, a government fenced in with ten rails and a top-rider.

Gentlemen, a distinguished lover of liberty of our own time, in another hemisphere, said, with apparent paradox, that the quantity of liberty in any country is exactly equal to the quantity of restraint; because, if government is restrained from putting its hand upon you, to that extent you are free; and all

regular liberty consists in putting restraints upon government and individuals, so that they shall not interfere with your freedom of action and purpose. You may easily simplify government; shallow thinkers talk of a simple government; Turkey is the simplest government in the world. But if you wish to secure entire personal liberty, you must multiply restraints upon the government, so that it cannot go farther than the public good requires. Then you may be free, and not otherwise.

Another great power by which executive influence augments itself, especially when the man who wields it stands at the head of a party, consists in the use of names. Mirabeau said that words are things; and so they are. But I believe that they are often fraudulent things, though always possessed of real power. The faculty of taking to ourselves a popular name, and giving an unpopular name to an adversary, is a matter of very great concern in politics. I put it to you, Gentlemen, whether, for the last month or two, the activity of this government has not consisted chiefly in the discharge of a shower of hard names. Have you, for a month past, heard any man defend the subtreasury? Have you seen any man, during that time, burn his fingers by taking hold of Mr. Poinsett's militia project? Their whole resort has been to pour out upon us a tide of denunciation as aristocrats, aristocrats; taking to themselves, meanwhile, the well-deserved designation of true Democrats. How cheering, how delightful, that a man, independent of any regard to his own character or worth, may thus range himself under a banner the most acceptable of all others to his fellow-citizens! It is with false patriotism as with base money; it relies on the stamp. It does not wish to be weighed; it hates the scales; it is thrown into horrors at the crucible; it must all go by tale; it holds out the king's head, with his name and superscription, and, if challenged, replies, Do you not see the stamp on my forehead? I belong to the Democratic family; make me current. But we live in an age too enlightened to be gulled by this business of stamping; we have learned to inquire into the true nature and value of things. Democracy most surely is not a term of reproach, but of respect. Our government is a constitutional, democratic, republican government; and if they mean that only, there is none will dispute that they are good Democrats. But if they set up qualifications and distinctions, if there are *genera*

and *species*, it may require twenty political Linnæuses to say to which class they belong.

There is another contrivance for the increase of executive power, which is utterly abhorrent to all true patriots, and against which, in an especial manner, General Washington has left us his farewell injunction; I mean, the constant recurrence to local differences, prejudices, and jealousies. That is the great bane and curse of this lovely country of ours. That country extends over a vast territory. There are few from among us in Massachusetts who enjoy the advantage of a personal intercourse with our friends in Virginia, and but few of you who visit us in Massachusetts. The farther South is still more remote. The difference which exists in habits and pursuits between us enables the enemy to sow tares, by exciting local prejudices on both sides. Sentiments are mutually ascribed to us which neither ever entertained. By this means a party press is enabled to destroy that generous spirit of brotherhood which should exist between us. All patriotic men ought carefully to guard themselves against the effects of arts like these.

And here I am brought to advert for one moment to what I constantly see in all the administration papers, from Baltimore south. It is one perpetual outcry, admonishing the people of the South that their own State governments, and the property they hold under them, are not secure, if they admit a Northern man to any considerable share in the administration of the general government. You all know that that is the universal cry. Now, I have spoken my sentiments in the neighborhood of Virginia, though not actually within the State, in June last, and again in the heart of Massachusetts in July, so that it is not now that I proclaim them for the first time. But further, ten years ago, when obliged to speak on this same subject, I uttered the same sentiment in regard to slavery, and to the absence of all power in Congress to interfere, in any manner whatever, with that subject. I shall ask some friend connected with the press to circulate in Virginia what I said on this subject in the Senate of the United States, in January, 1830.* I have nothing to add

* Mr. Webster had reference here to the remarks on the subject of slavery contained in his speech delivered in the Senate of the United States, in reply to Mr. Hayne, on the 21st of January, 1830, which will be found in a subsequent volume of this collection.

to or subtract from what I then said. I commend it to your attention, or, rather, I desire you to look at it. I hold that Congress is absolutely precluded from interfering in any manner, direct or indirect, with this, as with any other of the institutions of the States. [The cheering was here loud and long continued, and a voice from the crowd exclaimed, "We wish this could be heard from Maryland to Louisiana, and we desire that the sentiment just expressed may be repeated. Repeat! Repeat!"] Well, I repeat it; proclaim it on the wings of all the winds, tell it to all your friends, — [cries of "We will! We will!"] — tell it, I say, that, standing here in the Capitol of Virginia, beneath an October sun, in the midst of this assemblage, before the entire country, and upon all the responsibility which belongs to me, I say that there is no power, direct or indirect, in Congress or the general government, to interfere in the slightest degree with the institutions of the South.

And now, fellow-citizens, I ask you only to do me one favor. I ask you to carry that paper home; read it; read it to your neighbors; and when you hear the cry, "Shall Mr. Webster, the Abolitionist, be allowed to profane the soil of Virginia?" that you will tell them that, in connection with the doctrine in that speech, I hold that there are two governments over us, each possessing its own distinct authority, with which the other may not interfere. I may differ from you in some things, but I will here say that, as to the doctrines of State rights, as held by Mr. Madison in his last days, I do not know that we differ at all; yet I am one, and among the foremost, to hold that it is indispensable to the prosperity of these governments to preserve, and that he is no true friend to either who does not labor to preserve, a true distinction between both.

We may not all see the line which divides them alike; but all honest men know that there is a line, and they all fear to go either on the one or the other side of it. It is this balance between the general and the State governments which has preserved the country in unexampled prosperity for fifty years; and the destruction of this just balance will be the destruction of our government. What I believe to be the doctrine of State rights, I hold as firmly as any man. Do I not belong to a State? and, may I not say, to a State which has done something to give herself renown, and to her sons some little share

of participated distinction? I say again, that the upholding of State rights, on the one hand, and of the just powers of Congress, on the other, is indispensable to the preservation of our free republican government.

And now, Gentlemen, permit me to address to you a few words in regard to those measures of the general government which have caused the existing excitement throughout the country. I will pass rapidly over them. I need not argue to you Democrats the question of the sub-treasury, and I suppose it is hardly necessary to speak to you of Mr. Poinsett's militia bill. Into which of your mountains has not its discussion penetrated? Up which of all your winding streams has not its echo floated? I am sure he must be very tired of it himself. Remember always that the great principle of the Constitution on that subject is, that the militia is the militia of the States, and not of the general government; and being thus the militia of the States, there is no part of the Constitution worded with greater care, and with a more scrupulous jealousy, than that which grants and limits the power of Congress over it. Does it say that Congress may make use of the militia as it pleases? that it may call them out for drill and discipline under its own pay? No such thing. The terms used are the most precise and particular: — "Congress may provide for calling out the militia to execute the laws, to suppress insurrection, and to repel invasion." These three cases are specified, and these are all. Call out the militia to drill them! to discipline them! March the militia of Virginia to Wheeling to be drilled! Why, such a thing never entered into the head of any man, — never, never. What is not very usual in the Constitution, after this specific enumeration of powers, it adds a negative in those golden words reserving to the States the appointment of officers and the *training* of the militia. That's it. Read this clause, and then read in Mr. Poinsett's project that the militia are to be trained by the *President!* Look on this picture, and on that. I do Virginia no more than justice when I say, that she first laid hold upon this monstrous project, and has continued to denounce it, and will never consent to it, by whatever weight of authority it may be urged on the country.

As to the sub-treasury, the subject is worn out. The topic is almost as empty of new ideas as the treasury itself is of money.

I had, the other day, the honor to address an assemblage of the merchants of New York. I asked them, among other things, whether this eternal cry about a separation of bank and state was not all mockery and humbug; and thousands of merchants, intimately acquainted with the whole subject, cried, "Yes, yes; it is!" The fact unquestionably is, that the funds of the government are just as much in the custody of the banks at this moment as they ever were; yet at the same time I believe that, under the law, there does exist, whenever the revenues of the country shall be uncommonly large, a power to stop at pleasure all the solvent banks in the community. Such is the opinion uniformly held by the best-informed men in the commercial parts of the country.

There is another expedient to augment executive power, quite novel in its character. I refer to the power conferred upon the President to select from among the appropriations of Congress such as he may consider entitled to preference, if the treasury is unable to meet them all, and to give or withhold the public money accordingly. This is certainly a marvellously democratic doctrine. Do you not remember the emphasis with which Mr. Jefferson expressed himself on the subject of specific appropriations? The law, as it now stands, requires them to be specific If Congress, for instance, appropriate so many dollars for the building of ships, no part of the money may be applied to the pay of sailors or marines. This is the common rule. But how has this subject been treated in regard to those objects over which this Presidential discretion extends? The appropriations are specific still; but then a specific power is given to the President to dispense with the restriction; and thus one specific is set against the other. Let this process be carried but one step farther, and, although there may be a variety of appropriations made by Congress, yet, inasmuch as we have entire trust and confidence in the executive discretion, that the President will make the proper selections from among them, therefore we may enact, or say it shall be enacted, that what little money there may at any time be found in the treasury, the President may expend very much according to his own pleasure.

There is one other topic I must not omit. I am now endeavoring to prove, that, of all men on the face of the earth, you of Virginia, the descendants and disciples of some of the greatest

men of the Revolution, are most called to repudiate and to condemn the doctrines of this administration. I call upon you to apply to this administration all that body of political truth which you have learned from Henry, from Jefferson, from Madison, from Wythe, and that whole constellation of Revolutionary worthies, of whom you are justly proud, and under this light to examine and to say whether this exclusively Democratic administration are the favorers of civil liberty and of State rights, or the reverse. In furtherance of this design, I call your attention to the conduct of the President, of the executive departments, and of the Senate of the United States, in regard to the right and practice of the States to contract debts for their own purposes. Has it occurred to you what a deadly blow they have struck at the just authority and rights of the States? Let us follow this matter out a little. In the palmy times of the treasury, when it was not only full, but overflowing with the public money, the States, to a very considerable extent, engaged in works of internal improvement, and, in consequence of doing so, had occasion to borrow money. We all know that money can be had on much cheaper terms on the other continent than on this; hence the bonds of the States went abroad, and absorbed capital in Europe; and so long as their credit was unassailed and remained sound, this was accomplished, for the most part, at very reasonable rates. During this process, and while a number of the States had thus their State securities in the foreign market, the President of the United States, in his opening message to Congress at the commencement of the last session, comes out with a series of the most discouraging and most disparaging remarks on the credit of all the States. He tells Congress that the States will repent what they have done, and that they will find it difficult to pay the debts they have contracted; and this official language of the chief magistrate to the legislature goes out into the very market where these State bonds are held for sale. Then comes his Secretary, Mr. Woodbury, with a report in the same strain, giving it as his opinion, that the States have gone too far in this assumption of liabilities. But the thing does not stop here. Mr. Benton brings forward a resolution in the Senate declaring that the general government ought not to assume these debts of the States; that resolution is sent to a committee, and that committee make a report upon the

subject as long as yonder bridge, (though, I believe, by no means as often gone over,) the whole object and tendency of which are to disparage the credit of the States; and then Mr. Grundy makes a speech upon it to the same effect. What had Mr. Benton or Mr. Grundy to do with the matter? Were they called on to guarantee the debts of Virginia or of Maryland? Yet the effect very naturally and inevitably was, to depress the value of State securities in the foreign market. I was in Europe last summer. Massachusetts had her bonds in that market; and what did I see? The most miserable, pitiful, execrable lucubrations taken from the administration press in New York, endeavoring to prove that the States had not sovereignty enough to contract debts. These wretched productions declared that the bonds issued by the States of this Union were all void; that they were no better than waste paper; and exhorted European capitalists not to touch one of them. These articles, coming, as they did, from this side the water, were all seized on with avidity, and put into circulation in the leading journals of Europe. At the same time, the administration press in this country, unrebuked by the government, put forth arguments going to show that Virginia has no authority to contract a debt in the name and on the credit of the Commonwealth; that Massachusetts is so completely shorn of every particle of sovereignty whatever, that she can issue no public security of any kind on which to borrow money! And this is the doctrine of State rights! Well, Gentlemen, I was called on to meet this question, and I told those who put to me the inquiry, that the States of the American Union were, in this respect, just as sovereign as any of their states in Europe. I held a correspondence on the subject, which was published at length; and for that, yes, for defending State rights before the face of all Europe, I have been denounced as one who wants the general government to assume the debts of the States, as one who has conspired to buy up British Whigs (as they call us) with foreign gold! All this, however, has not ruffled my temper. I have seen it all with composure.

But I confess there is one thing which has disturbed the serenity of my mind. It is what appears to be a studied attempt, on the part of this whole administration, including its head, to fix a spot upon the good name of the early founders of our Constitution. Read the letter of the President to some of his

friends in Kentucky, to what he calls "the entire Democracy of Kentucky." (I should like much to know what constitutes the Democracy of a State.) These good friends of the President write to him that the entire Democracy of the State is with him, and he writes back how happy he is to hear that such is the fact. The State comes to the vote, and two thirds of the people of the State are found to be against him; yet still he clasps to his breast, with exultation, the "entire Democracy of Kentucky!" And so it will be a month hence. General Harrison will have been elected by a simultaneous rush of the free voters of the whole Union; yet Mr. Van Buren will still insist that he has in his favor "the entire Democracy" of the country. Be this as it may, he does, in that letter, ascribe to President Washington, in 1791, and to Mr. Madison, in 1816, corrupt motives for their public conduct. I may forgive this, but I shall not forget it. I ask you to read that letter, and one other written on a similar occasion; and then, if it comes in your way, I ask you to peruse an address put forth by the administration members of the New York Legislature. What do you think they say? You, countrymen of Jefferson and of Madison, of Henry, of Wythe, of the Lees, and a host of kindred spirits of the same order, — you, who inherit the soil and the principles of those men who shed their blood for our national independence, — what do you think they say of your fathers and of my fathers? Why, that, in all their efforts and sacrifices in that great struggle, they meant, not independence, not civil liberty, not the establishment of a republican government, but merely to transfer the throne from England to America, and to be themselves peers and nobles around it! Does it not disturb the blood of Virginians to hear language like this? I do say that this attempt to scorch the fair, unsullied reputation of our ancestors —— But no, no, they cannot scorch it; it will go through a hotter furnace than any their detraction can kindle, and even the smell of fire shall not be upon their garments. Yet it does raise one's indignation to see men, certainly not the greatest of all benefactors of their country, thus attempt to blight the fame of men both then and ever since universally admitted to have been among her greatest and her best of friends.

While speaking of the attacks of this administration on State rights, I should not do my duty if I omitted to notice the outrage recently perpetrated on the most sacred rights of the State

and people of New Jersey. By the Constitution of the United States, New Jersey, like the other States, is entitled to have a certain quota of representatives in Congress; and she chooses them by general ticket or in districts, as she thinks fit. The right to have a specific number of representatives is a State right under the Constitution. Under the constitutional guaranty of this right, New Jersey sends up to the House of Representatives her proper number of men. Now, I say that, by universal principles, although Congress be the judge, in the last resort, of the election return and qualification of her own members, those who bring in their hand the prescribed evidence of their election, by the people of any State, are entitled to take their seats upon the floor of that House, and to hold them until disturbed by proof preferred on petition. That this is so must be apparent from the fact, that those members who voted them out of their seats possessed no better or other means of proving their own right to sit and to vote on that question, than that held by any one of those whom they excluded. Were there other States situated precisely in this respect as New Jersey, would it not be as fair for the New Jersey members to vote these representatives out of the Representative Hall as it was for them to vote hers out? I think it is Virginia law, it is at least plantation law, that is to say, the law of common sense, and that is very good law, that, until the house is organized, he who has the evidence of his return as a representative elected by the people of his district, is entitled to take his seat. But the representatives of New Jersey, with this evidence in their hand, were voted out of their seats; their competitors, while the evidence was still under examination, were voted in, and immediately gave their complacent votes for the sub-treasury bill.

Gentlemen, I cannot forget where I am. I cannot forget how often you have heard these subjects treated with far greater ability than I can bring to the discussion. I will not further dwell upon these topics. The time has come when the public mind is nearly made up, and is very shortly about to settle these questions, together with the prosperity of the country for many years to come. I am only desirous of keeping myself to the line of remark with which I commenced. I say, then, that the enemy has been driven to his last citadel. He takes to himself a popular name, while beneath its cover he fires all manner of abuse upon his adversaries. That seems to be his only remain-

ing mode of warfare. If you ask him what are his pretensions to the honors and confidence of the country, his answer is, "I am a Democrat." But are you not in love with Mr. Poinsett's bill? The answer still is, "I am a Democrat, and support all the measures of this Democratic administration." But do you approve of the turning out of the members from New Jersey? "O, yes, because the words are written on our banner (words actually placed on one of the administration flags in a procession in the interior of New York), '*The Democracy scorns the broad seal of New Jersey.*'"

My friends, I only desire that the professions and principles of this administration may be examined. We are coming to those times when men can no longer be deceived by mere professions. Virginia has once been deceived by them; but that day is past; the times are coming, they are, I trust, just at hand, when that distinguished son of Virginia, that eminent and patriotic citizen who has been put in nomination for the chief executive office under this government, will be elected by the unbought, unconstrained suffrages of his countrymen. To that event I look forward with as much certainty as to the duration of his life.

My acquaintance with the feelings and sentiments of the North has been extensive; and I believe that, from Pennsylvania east, New Jersey, New York, and the whole of New England, with the solitary exception, probably, of New Hampshire, — I say, I have not a doubt that the whole of this part of the country is in favor of the election of William Henry Harrison to the Presidency. Of my native State of New Hampshire I shall always speak with respect. I believe that the very foundations of her granite hills begin to shake; indeed, my only fear for her is, that she will come into the great family of her sister States only when her aid is no longer needed, and therefore too late for her own reputation.

Fellow-citizens, we are on a great march to the triumphant victory of the principles of liberty over executive power. If we do not accomplish it now, the future, I own, appears to me full of darkness and of doubt. If the American people shall sanction the course and the principles of this administration, I, for one, though I have been thought hitherto of rather a sanguine temperament, shall begin not a little to despair of the republic. But I will not despair of it. The public mind is aroused; men

are beginning to think for themselves; and when they do this, they are not far from a right decision. There is an attempt on the part of the administration, — who seem beginning, at length, to fear for the perpetuity of their power, — to excite a feeling of acrimony and bitterness among neighbors. Have you not seen this, particularly of late, in the administration papers? Be above it. Tell your neighbors that we are all embarked in one cause, and that we must sink or swim *together*. Invite them, not in a taunting, but in a generous and a temperate spirit, to come forth and argue the great questions of the day, and to see if they can give good and solid reasons why there should not be a change. Yes, a CHANGE. I said when I was in Baltimore, in May last, and I repeat it here, the cry, the universal cry, is for a change. However well many may think of the motives and designs of the existing administration, they see that it has not succeeded in securing the well-being of the country, and they are for a change. Let us revile nobody; let us repel nobody. They desire but light; let us give it to them. Let us discuss with moderation and coolness the great topics of public policy, and endeavor to bring all men of American heart and feeling into what I sincerely believe to be the true AMERICAN CAUSE. How shall I, — O, how shall I express to you my sense of the obligation which rests upon this generation to preserve from destruction our free and happy republican institutions? Who shall spread fatal dissensions among us? Are we not together under one common government, to obtain which the blood of your fathers and of mine was poured out together in the same hard-fought fields? Nay, does imagination itself, in its highest flight, suggest any thing in the form of political institutions for which you would exchange these dearly-bought constitutions of our own? For my part, having now arrived at that period of life when men begin to reflect upon the past, I love to draw around me in thought those pure and glorious spirits who achieved our Revolution, and established our forms of government. I cannot find a deeper or more fervent sentiment in my heart than that these precious institutions and liberties which we enjoy may be transmitted unimpaired to the latest posterity; that they may terminate only with the termination of all things earthly, when the world itself shall terminate, —

> "When, wrapped in flames, the realms of ether glow,
> And Heaven's last thunders shake the world below."

Remarks to the Ladies of Richmond

Remarks to the Ladies of Richmond*

The visit of Mr. Webster to Richmond was short, and his public engagements so numerous, as to put it out of his power to return the calls of his friends, or to pay his respects to their families. It was accordingly proposed that the ladies who might desire to do so should assemble in the "Log Cabin," and that he should there pay his respects to them collectively. The meeting was large, and the building quite full. On being introduced to them, in a few appropriate remarks, by Mr. Lyons, Mr. Webster addressed them in the following speech: —

Ladies, — I am very sure I owe the pleasure I now enjoy to your kind disposition, which has given me the opportunity to present my thanks and my respects to you thus collectively, since the shortness of my stay in the city does not allow me the happiness of calling upon those, severally and individually, from members of whose families I have received kindness and notice. And, in the first place, I wish to express to you my deep and hearty thanks, as I have endeavored to do to your fathers, your husbands, and your brothers, for the unbounded hospitality I have received ever since I came among you. This is registered, I assure you, in a grateful heart, in characters of an enduring nature. The rough contests of the political world are not suited to the dignity and the delicacy of your sex; but you possess the intelligence to know how much of that happiness which you are entitled to hope for, both for yourselves and for your children, depends on the right administration of government, and a proper tone of public morals. That is a subject on which the moral perceptions of woman are both quicker and juster than

* Remarks made at a Public Reception by the Ladies of Richmond, Virginia, on the 5th of October, 1840.

those of the other sex. I do not speak of that administration of government whose object is merely the protection of industry, the preservation of civil liberty, and the securing to enterprise of its due reward. I speak of government in a somewhat higher point of view; I speak of it in regard to its influence on the morals and sentiments of the community. We live in an age distinguished for great benevolent exertion, in which the affluent are consecrating the means they possess to the endowment of colleges and academies, to the building of churches, to the support of religion and religious worship, to the encouragement of schools, lyceums, and athenæums, and other means of general popular instruction. This is all well; it is admirable; it augurs well for the prospects of ensuing generations. But I have sometimes thought, that, amidst all this activity and zeal of the good and the benevolent, the influence of government on the morals and on the religious feelings of the community is apt to be overlooked or underrated. I speak, of course, of its indirect influence, of the power of its example, and the general tone which it inspires.

A popular government, in all these respects, is a most powerful institution; more powerful, as it has sometimes appeared to me, than the influence of most other human institutions put together, either for good or for evil, according to its character. Its example, its tone, whether of regard or disregard for moral obligation, is most important to human happiness; it is among those things which most affect the political morals of mankind, and their general morals also. I advert to this, because there has been put forth, in modern times, the false maxim, that there is one morality for politics, and another morality for other things; that, in their political conduct to their opponents, men may say and do that which they would never think of saying or doing in the personal relations of private life. There has been openly announced a sentiment, which I consider as the very essence of false morality, which declares that "all is fair in politics." If a man speaks falsely or calumniously of his neighbor, and is reproached for the offence, the ready excuse is this: — "It was in relation to public and political matters; I cherished no personal ill-will whatever against that individual, but quite the contrary; I spoke of my adversary merely as a political man." In my opinion, the day is coming when falsehood will stand for false-

hood, and calumny will be treated as a breach of the commandment, whether it be committed politically or in the concerns of private life.

It is by the promulgation of sound morals in the community, and more especially by the training and instruction of the young, that woman performs her part towards the preservation of a free government. It is generally admitted that public liberty, and the perpetuity of a free constitution, rest on the virtue and intelligence of the community which enjoys it. How is that virtue to be inspired, and how is that intelligence to be communicated? Bonaparte once asked Madame de Staël in what manner he could best promote the happiness of France. Her reply is full of political wisdom. She said, "Instruct the mothers of the French people." Mothers are, indeed, the affectionate and effective teachers of the human race. The mother begins her process of training with the infant in her arms. It is she who directs, so to speak, its first mental and spiritual pulsations. She conducts it along the impressible years of childhood and youth, and hopes to deliver it to the stern conflicts and tumultuous scenes of life, armed by those good principles which her child has received from maternal care and love.

If we draw within the circle of our contemplation the mothers of a civilized nation, what do we see? We behold so many artificers working, not on frail and perishable matter, but on the immortal mind, moulding and fashioning beings who are to exist for ever. We applaud the artist whose skill and genius present the mimic man upon the canvas; we admire and celebrate the sculptor who works out that same image in enduring marble; but how insignificant are these achievements, though the highest and the fairest in all the departments of art, in comparison with the great vocation of human mothers! They work, not upon the canvas that shall perish, or the marble that shall crumble into dust, but upon mind, upon spirit, which is to last for ever, and which is to bear, for good or evil, throughout its duration, the impress of a mother's plastic hand.

I have already expressed the opinion, which all allow to be correct, that our security for the duration of the free institutions which bless our country depends upon habits of virtue and the prevalence of knowledge and of education. The attainment of knowledge does not comprise all which is contained in the

larger term of education. The feelings are to be disciplined; the passions are to be restrained; true and worthy motives are to be inspired; a profound religious feeling is to be instilled, and pure morality inculcated, under all circumstances. All this is comprised in education. Mothers who are faithful to this great duty will tell their children, that neither in political nor in any other concerns of life can man ever withdraw himself from the perpetual obligations of conscience and of duty; that in every act, whether public or private, he incurs a just responsibility; and that in no condition is he warranted in trifling with important rights and obligations. They will impress upon their children the truth, that the exercise of the elective franchise is a social duty, of as solemn a nature as man can be called to perform; that a man may not innocently trifle with his vote; that every free elector is a trustee, as well for others as himself; and that every man and every measure he supports has an important bearing on the interests of others, as well as on his own. It is in the inculcation of high and pure morals such as these, that, in a free republic, woman performs her sacred duty, and fulfils her destiny. The French, as you know, are remarkable for their fondness for sententious phrases, in which much meaning is condensed into a small space. I noticed lately, on the title-page of one of the books of popular instruction in France, this motto: — "Pour instruction on the heads of the people! you owe them that baptism." And, certainly, if there be any duty which may be described by a reference to that great institute of religion, — a duty approaching it in importance, perhaps next to it in obligation, — it is this.

I know you hardly expect me to address you on the popular political topics of the day. You read enough, you hear quite enough, on those subjects. You expect me only to meet you, and to tender my profound thanks for this marked proof of your regard, and will kindly receive the assurances with which I tender to you, on parting, my affectionate respects and best wishes.

Reception at Boston

Introductory Note

On the accession of General Harrison to the Presidency of the United States, on the 4th of March, 1841, Mr. Webster was called to the office of Secretary of State, in which, after the President's untimely death, he continued under Mr. Tyler for about two years. The relations of the country with Great Britain were at that time in a very critical position, as is more particularly stated in the introduction to a subsequent volume of this collection containing Mr. Webster's diplomatic correspondence. The most important and difficult subject which engaged the attention of the government, while he filled the Department of State, was the negotiation of the treaty with Great Britain, which was signed at Washington on the 9th of August, 1842. The other members of General Harrison's Cabinet having resigned their places in the autumn of 1841, discontent was felt by some of their friends, that Mr. Webster should have consented to retain his. But as Mr. Tyler continued to place entire confidence in Mr. Webster's administration of the Department of State, the great importance of pursuing a steady line of policy in reference to foreign affairs, and especially the hope of averting a rupture with England by an honorable settlement of our difficulties with that country, induced Mr. Webster to remain at his post.

On occasion of a visit made by him to Boston, after the adjournment of Congress, in August, 1842, a number of his friends were desirous of manifesting their sense of the services which he had rendered to the country by pursuing this course, and the following correspondence took place.

To the Hon. Daniel Webster: —

Sir, — The undersigned, desirous of evincing their gratitude for your eminent and patriotic public services, during a long term of years, and especially for the part sustained by you in the late negotiations which have been so skilfully conducted and happily terminated in a treaty

with Great Britain, invite you to meet them at a public dinner, at such time as shall be convenient to yourself.

HARRISON GRAY OTIS,
JEREMIAH MASON,
WILLIAM STURGIS,
JOSIAH BRADLEE,
CHARLES G. LORING,
CHARLES P. CURTIS,
WILLIAM APPLETON,
ABBOTT LAWRENCE,
NATHAN APPLETON,
PATRICK T. JACKSON,
JOSEPH BALCH,
JAMES K. MILLS,
F. SKINNER,
J. T. STEVENSON,
HENRY CABOT,
PETER C. BROOKS,
ROBERT G. SHAW,
BENJAMIN RICH,
PHINEAS SPRAGUE,
HENRY OXNARD,
J. INGERSOLL BOWDITCH,
S. AUSTIN, Jr.,
J. T. BUCKINGHAM,
THOMAS B. CURTIS,
ABEL PHELPS,
PETER HARVEY,
EBENEZER CHADWICK,
ROBERT HOOPER, Jr.,
SAMUEL QUINCY,
OZIAS GOODWIN,
JOS. RUSSELL,
JACOB BIGELOW,
JONATHAN CHAPMAN,
G. R. RUSSELL,
H. WAINWRIGHT,
FRANCIS FISHER,
JOHN S. BLAKE,
FRANCIS C. GRAY,
B. R. CURTIS,
LEMUEL SHAW,
THOMAS B. WALES,
GEORGE MOREY,
C. W. CARTWRIGHT,
E. BALDWIN,
HORACE SCUDDER,
FRANCIS WELCH,
JOHN L. DIMMOCK,
FRANCIS C. LOWELL,
CALEB CURTIS,
GEORGE HAYWARD,
AMOS LAWRENCE,
GEORGE DARRACOTT,
SIDNEY BARTLETT,
SEWELL TAPPAN,
SAMUEL L. ABBOT,
JOSEPH BALLISTER,
HENRY D. GRAY,
GEORGE B. CARY,
NATHAN HALE,
J. M. FORBES,
S. HOOPER,
GEORGE HOWE,
WILLIAM H. GARDINER,
J. H. WOLCOTT,
DANIEL C. BACON,
J. DAVIS, Jr.,
W. C. AYLWIN,
FRANKLIN DEXTER,
ISAAC LIVERMORE,
THOMAS KINNICUTT,
EDMUND DWIGHT,
JOHN P. ROBINSON,
HENRY WILSON,
GEORGE T. CURTIS,
GEORGE T. BIGELOW,
WILLIAM W. GREENOUGH,
THOMAS LAMB,
JOSEPH GRINNELL.

BOSTON, *September* 8, 1842.

Boston, September 9, 1842.

GENTLEMEN, — I have received your letter of the 8th instant, inviting me to a public dinner, and am duly sensible of the value of this proof of your regard.

It will give me great pleasure to meet all my fellow-citizens, who may desire to see me; and the mode of such meeting I should leave to them, with a preference, however, on my part, if equally agreeable to others, that the dinner should be dispensed with, and that the meeting should be had in such a manner as shall impose the least restrictions, and best suit the convenience of all who may be disposed to attend it.

I am, Gentlemen, with very sincere regard,
Your obliged fellow-citizen, and obedient servant,
DANIEL WEBSTER.

To Messrs. H. G. OTIS, J. MASON, WILLIAM STURGIS, JOSIAH BRADLEE, CHARLES G. LORING, CHARLES P. CURTIS, WILLIAM APPLETON, ABBOTT LAWRENCE, and others.

In pursuance of this correspondence, a public meeting was appointed to be held in Faneuil Hall, on the 30th of September. Some time before the hour appointed for the reception of Mr. Webster, the hall was

filled. Very many of the most distinguished citizens came at an early hour, to make sure of admission, and the hall was soon crowded to its utmost capacity. Great numbers were obliged to turn away without being able to come within the doors.

Just before eleven o'clock, His Honor Jonathan Chapman, Mayor of the city, rose, and said that he had received a letter from a committee of those gentlemen who had extended the invitation to Mr. Webster, requesting him to preside. This he had consented to do, unless objection should be made. He would only add, that the committee would introduce Mr. Webster precisely at eleven o'clock.

Amid the enthusiastic applause that followed this information, Mr. Webster, with the committee of his friends, entered the hall. Mr. Chapman led him forward upon the platform, and, after the assembly had given nine hearty cheers, addressed its guest as follows.

"MR. WEBSTER: — I have the honor, Sir, to be the organ of this large assembly of your former constituents, and still fellow-citizens and friends, who have gathered to greet you with a cordial welcome, upon your visit to what we are proud to call, and trust you will always feel to be, your home. We sought to meet you at a social festival; but it has taken the present far better form, at your own request. The pointed meaning, however, of the occasion is unchanged. Believing that, as a true republican, you will find the richest reward of your public services in the respect and gratitude of those whom you serve, we would assure you in the most emphatic manner, that, so far as your friends here are concerned, you have them from the heart. We would assure you, that though your duties, at your country's call, have separated you from us for a season, you are not forgotten; but that wherever your destiny may place you, so long as you shall be nobly defending your country's Constitution, as in time past, and maintaining untarnished her honor, there will be living and beating here hearts in which you will ever be enshrined.

"A large portion, Sir, of your mature life has been spent in the public service, and of that portion, a great part as the immediate representative of this city and Commonwealth. We rejoice in this opportunity of testifying to you, that your long and eminent services in our behalf are still held in most grateful remembrance. We acknowledge our deep obligations to you, for your unwavering fidelity to our interests, for your able support of that cause of American industry, whose protection has so distinguished the recent session of Congress, and for the broad and comprehensive spirit in which your legislative duties were ever discharged. Bright, Sir, ever bright, will be the page of history which records the efforts of your commanding intellect in the councils of the nation. And New England, — glorious New England, your birthplace and your home, whose heart, you know, is warm, though her skies be cold, — New England, from every summit of her granite hills, will never cease to hail you as her worthy representative.

"We resigned you with regret, indeed, but still with ready acquies

cence in the wise judgment of that good old man, who, himself placed in the Presidential chair amidst a people's acclamations, from amongst the bright lights of this broad land selected you to stand at his right hand. It pleased a wise but inscrutable Providence, too soon, alas! to mortal eyes, to remove him from his elevated seat on earth to, we trust, a higher one above. But nobly, Sir, have you sustained the momentous interests, which, in a most critical period of the country's history, he committed to your charge. No sound, indeed, of his glad voice shall ever again greet your ear. But we feel that his benignant spirit has been, and will still be, near to bless you, and approve the loud 'Well done!' with which every true patriot must salute you.

"It is to your eminent services, Sir, on this broader field which you have lately occupied, that we look this day with special pride and admiration. Sir, in simple but heartfelt language, we thank you for the honorable attitude in which, so far as your department has been concerned, you have placed your country before the world. Would to God that it stood as well in other respects! In the many emergencies in our foreign relations which the two past years have presented, you have been faithful throughout to the true interests and honor of the country, and nowhere in its archives can abler, manlier, wiser, or more dignified papers be found, than those which bear your signature.

"When the dark cloud lowered upon our neighboring frontier, when a great and fundamental law of nations had wellnigh yielded to popular passion, when a single step only intervened between us and a war that must have been disastrous, as it would have found us in the wrong, it was your wise and energetic interference that dispelled the storm, by seeking to make us just, even under galling provocation.

"When a gasconading upstart from a neighboring republic, so called, presumed to address to this government a communication worthy only of his own, but which no one of his coadjutors was bold enough to present in person, one firm and dignified look from our own Secretary of State, a single sweep of his powerful arm, relieved the country from any further specimens of Mexican diplomacy.

"And, crowning act of all, when, amidst the numerous and perplexing questions which had so long disturbed the harmony of two nations whom God meant should always be friends, England sent forth her ambassador of compromise and peace, you met him like a man. Subtle diplomacy and political legerdemain you threw to the winds; and taking only for your guides simple honesty, common sense, and a Christian spirit, behold! by their magic influence, there is not a cloud in the common heavens above us, but only the glad and cheering sunlight of friendship and peace.

"We have already, Sir, on this same spot, expressed our approbation of this treaty with England, while paying a merited tribute of respect to the distinguished representative of that country * who was associated with you in its adjustment. We repeat to you our satisfaction with the result, and with the magnanimous spirit by which it was accomplished. We may add now as we might not then, that we know not the other

* Lord Ashburton.

William Wirt

From the Painting by Henry Inman,
Boston Athenæum

individual within the limits of the country who could have so successfully achieved this happy event.

"We are aware, Sir, that this treaty is not yet completed, but that an important act is yet necessary for its accomplishment. We anticipate no such result, and yet it may be that still further work is necessary for the crowning of our hopes. You have brought skill and labor, ay, and self-sacrifice too, to this great work, we know. And whatever may befall the country, in this or any other matter, we are sure that you will be ready to sacrifice every thing for her good, save honor. And on that point, amidst the perplexities of these perplexing times, we shall be at ease; for we know that he who has so nobly maintained his country's honor may safely be intrusted with his own.

"And permit us, Sir, most warmly to greet you as our personal friend and fellow-citizen. Though the few and brief intervals of leisure which your public duties have permitted you, have allowed us far less intercourse with you in private life than we have wished, we have never ceased to feel that you were one of us. We rejoice in the kind Providence which has been with you in the past, and may Heaven still smile upon your future years. Long may you live to be an ornament and support of your native republic. And when at last your sun goes down, as every orb, the brightest even, must set, may it be from a serene and tranquil sky. It was bright at its rising; it is brilliant at its meridian. May no clouds gather around its departing; but, life's labors done and honors won, may it, — in your own classical and beautiful words, — may it go down with 'slow-descending, long-lingering light.'

"And now, fellow-citizens, it would be the idlest ceremony in the world, to presume to introduce to you our distinguished guest. It was his privilege, upon the occasion of an important trial in the Supreme Court of this Commonwealth, a few years since, to introduce to that court, and to the bar, the late lamented William Wirt, his opposing counsel in the cause. He did it by a just and beautiful tribute to his eminent talents and worth. It was the no less just and beautiful reply of Mr. Wirt, when he rose in turn to address the court, that he had one reason to regret the very kind introduction which he had just received; for his friend, Mr. Webster, had thereby placed him under an obligation which it never would be in his power to return, — for he never could meet that gentleman at any bar in the United States where his name and his fame had not gone before him.

"And here, fellow-citizens, in Boston, — here in Faneuil Hall, last place of all, and amongst you, last people of all, is such a ceremony needed. I have only to say that Daniel Webster, the faithful representative, the manly and able statesman, your fellow-citizen and friend, is before you, and I leave his name to do the rest."

Mr. Webster then delivered the following speech.

Reception at Boston

I KNOW not how it is, Mr. Mayor, but there is something in the echoes of these walls, or in this sea of upturned faces which I behold before me, or in the genius that always hovers over this place, fanning ardent and patriotic feeling by every motion of its wings, — I know not how it is, but there is something that excites me strangely, deeply, before I even begin to speak. It cannot be doubted that this salutation and greeting from my fellow-citizens of Boston is a tribute dear to my heart. Boston is indeed my home, my cherished home. It is now more than twenty-five years since I came to it with my family, to pursue, here in this enlightened metropolis, those objects of professional life for which my studies and education were designed to fit me. It is twenty years since I was invited by the citizens of Boston to take upon myself an office of public trust in their service.* It gives me infinite pleasure to see here to-day, among those who hold the seats yielded to such as are more advanced in life, not a few of the gentlemen who were earnestly instrumental in inducing me to enter upon a course of life wholly unexpected, and to devote myself to the service of the public.

Whenever the duties of public life have withdrawn me from this home, I have felt it, nevertheless, to be the attractive spot to which all local affection tended. And now that the progress of time must shortly bring about the period, if it should not be hastened by the progress of events, when the duties of public life shall yield to the influences of advancing years, I cherish no hope more precious, than to pass here in these associations and among these friends what may remain to me of life; and to

* The office of Representative in Congress.

leave in the midst of you, fellow-citizens, partaking of your fortunes, whether for good or for evil, those who bear my name, and inherit my blood.

The Mayor has alluded, very kindly, to the exertions which I have made since I have held a position in the Cabinet, and especially to the results of the negotiation in which I have been recently engaged. I hope, fellow-citizens, that something has been done which may prove permanently useful to the public. I have endeavored to do something, and I hope my endeavors have not been in vain. I have had a hard summer's work, it is true, but I am not wholly unused to hard work. I have had some anxious days, I have spent some sleepless nights; but if the results of my efforts shall be approved by the community, I am richly compensated. My other days will be the happier, and my other nights will be given to a sweeter repose.

It was an object of the highest national importance, no doubt, to disperse the clouds which threatened a storm between England and America. For several years past there has been a class of questions open between the two countries, which have not always threatened war, but which have prevented the people from being assured of permanent peace.

His Honor the Mayor has paid a just tribute to that lamented personage, by whom, in 1841, I was called to the place I now occupy; and although, Gentlemen, I know it is in very bad taste to speak much of one's self, yet here, among my friends and neighbors, I wish to say a word or two on subjects in which I am concerned. With the late President Harrison, I had contracted an acquaintance while we were both members of Congress, and I had an opportunity of renewing it afterwards in his own house, and elsewhere. I have made no exhibition or boast of the confidence which it was his pleasure to repose in me; but circumstances, hardly worthy of serious notice, have rendered it not improper for me to say on this occasion, that as soon as President Harrison was elected, without, of course, one word from me, he wrote to me inviting me to take a place in his Cabinet, leaving to me the choice of that place, and asking my advice as to the persons that should fill every other place in it. He expressed rather a wish that I should take the administration of the treasury, because, as he was pleased to say, I had devoted myself with success to the examination of the questions

of currency and finance, and he felt that the wants of the country, — the necessities of the country, on the great subjects of currency and finance, — were moving causes that produced the revolution which had placed him in the presidential chair.

It so happened, Gentlemen, that my preference was for another place, — for that which I have now the honor to fill. I felt all its responsibilities; but I must say, that, with whatever attention I had considered the general questions of finance, I felt more competent and willing to undertake the duties of an office which did not involve the daily drudgery of the treasury.

I was not disappointed, Gentlemen, in the exigency which then existed in our foreign relations. I was not unaware of all the difficulties which hung over us; for although the whole of the danger was not at that moment developed, the cause of it was known, and it seemed as if an outbreak was inevitable. I allude now to that occurrence on the frontier of which the chairman has already spoken, which took place in the winter of 1841, the case of Alexander McLeod.

A year or two before, the Canadian government had seen fit to authorize a military incursion, for a particular purpose, within the territory of the United States. That purpose was to destroy a steamboat, charged with being employed for hostile purposes against its forces and the peaceable subjects of the crown. The act was avowed by the British government at home as a public act. Alexander McLeod, a person who individually could claim no regard or sympathy, happened to be one of the agents who, in a military character, performed the act of their sovereign. Coming into the United States some years after, he was arrested under a charge of homicide committed in this act, and was held to trial as for a private felony.

According to my apprehensions, a proceeding of this kind was directly adverse to the well-settled doctrines of the public law. It could not but be received with lively indignation, not only by the British government, but among the people of England. It would be so received among us. If a citizen of the United States should as a military man receive an order of his government and obey it, (and he must either obey it or be hanged,) and should afterwards, in the territory of another power, which by that act he had offended, be tried for a violation of its law, as for a crime, and threatened with individual punish-

ment, there is not a man in the United States who would not cry out for redress and for vengeance. Any elevated government, in a case like this, where one of its citizens, in the performance of his duty, incurs such menaces and danger, assumes the responsibility; any elevated government says, "The act was mine, — I am the man"; "Adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum."

Now, Gentlemen, information of the action of the British government on this subject was transmitted to us at Washington within a few days after the installation of General Harrison. I did not think that it was proper to make public then, nor is it important to say now, all that we knew on the subject; but I will tell you, in general terms, that if all that was known at Washington then had been divulged throughout the country, the value of the shipping interest of this city, and of every other interest connected with the commerce of the country, would have been depressed one half in six hours. I thought that the concussion might be averted, by holding up to view the principles of public law by which this question ought to be settled, and by demanding an apology for whatever had been done against those principles of public law by the British government or its officers. I thought we ought to put ourselves right in the first place, and then we could insist that they should do right in the next place. When in England, in the year 1839, I had occasion to address a large and respectable assemblage; and allusion having been made to the relations of things between the two countries, I stated then, what I thought and now think, that in any controversy which should terminate in war between the United States and England, the only eminent advantage that *either* would possess would be found in the rectitude of its cause. With the right on our side, we are a match for England; and with the right on her side, she is a match for us, or for any body.

We live in an age, fellow-citizens, when there has been established among the nations a more elevated tribunal than ever before existed on earth; I mean the tribunal of the enlightened public opinion of the world. Governments cannot go to war now, either with or against the consent of their own subjects or people, without the reprobation of other states, unless for grounds and reasons justifying them in the general judgment of

mankind. The judgment of civilization, of commerce, and of that heavenly light that beams over Christendom, restrains men, congresses, parliaments, princes, and people from gratifying the inordinate love of ambition through the bloody scenes of war. It has been wisely said, and it is true, that every settlement of national differences between Christian states by fair negotiation, without resort to arms, is a new illustration and a new proof of the benign influence of the Christian faith.

With regard to the terms of this treaty, and in relation to the other subjects connected with it, it is somewhat awkward for me to speak, because the documents connected with them have not been made public by authority. But I persuade myself, that, when the whole shall be calmly considered, it will be seen that there was throughout a fervent disposition to maintain the interest and honor of the country, united with a proper regard for the preservation of peace between us and the greatest commercial nation of the world.

Gentlemen, while I receive these commendations which you have bestowed, I have an agreeable duty to perform to others. In the first place, I have great pleasure in bearing testimony to the intelligent interest manifested by the President of the United States, under whose authority, of course, I constantly acted throughout the negotiation, and his sincere and anxious desire that it might result successfully. I take great pleasure in acknowledging here, as I will acknowledge everywhere, my obligations to him for the unbroken and steady confidence reposed in me through the whole progress of an affair not unimportant to the country, and infinitely important to my own reputation.

A negotiator disparaged, distrusted, treated with jealousy by his own government, would be indeed a very unequal match for a cool and sagacious representative of one of the proudest and most powerful monarchies of Europe, possessing in the fullest extent the confidence of his government, and authorized to bind it in concerns of the greatest importance. I shall never forget the frankness and generosity with which, after a full and free interchange of suggestions upon the subject, I was told by the President that on my shoulders rested the responsibility of the negotiation, and on my discretion and judgment should rest the lead of every measure. I desire also to speak here of the hearty coöperation rendered every day by the other gentlemen connect-

ed with the administration, from every one of whom I received important assistance. I speak with satisfaction, also, of the useful labors of all the Commissioners, although I need hardly say here, what has been already said officially, that the highest respect is due to the Commissioners from Maine and Massachusetts for their faithful adherence to the rights of their own States, mingled with a cordial coöperation in what was required by the general interests of the United States. And I hope I shall not be considered as trespassing on this occasion, if I speak of the happy selection made by England of a person to represent her government on this occasion,* — a thorough Englishman, understanding and appreciating the great objects and interests of his own government, of large and liberal views, and of such standing and weight of character at home, as to impress a feeling of approbation of his course upon both government and people. He was fully acquainted with the subject, and always, on all occasions, as far as his allegiance and duty permitted, felt and manifested good-will towards this country.

Aside from the question of the boundary, there were other important subjects to be considered, to which I know not whether this is a proper occasion to allude. When the results of the negotiation shall be fully before the public, it will be seen that these other questions have not been neglected, questions of great moment and importance to the country; and then I shall look with concern, but with faith and trust, for the judgment of that country upon them. It is but just to take notice of a very important act, intended to provide for such cases as McLeod's, for which the country is indebted to the Whig majorities in the two houses of Congress, acting upon the President's recommendation. Events showed the absolute necessity of removing into the national tribunals questions involving the peace and honor of the United States.

There yet remain, Gentlemen, several other subjects still unsettled with England. First, there is that concerning the trade between the United States and the possessions of England, on this continent and in the West Indies. It has been my duty to look into that subject, and to keep the run of it, as we say, from the arrangement of 1829 and 1830, until the present time. That

* Lord Ashburton.

arrangement was one unfavorable to the shipping interests of the United States, and especially so to the New England States. To adjust these relations is an important subject, either for diplomatic negotiation, or the consideration of Congress. One or both houses of Congress, indeed, have already called upon the proper department for a report upon the operations of that arrangement, and a committee of the House of Representatives has made a report, showing that some adjustment of these relations is of vital importance to the future prosperity of our navigating interests.

There is another question, somewhat more remote; that of the Northwest Boundary, where the possessions of the two countries touch each other upon the Pacific. There are evident public reasons why that question should be settled before the country becomes peopled.

There are also, Gentlemen, many open questions respecting our relations with other governments. Upon most of the other States of this continent, citizens of the United States have claims, with regard to which the delays already incurred have caused great injustice; and it becomes the government of the United States, by a calm and dignified course, and a deliberate and vigorous tone of administration of public affairs, to secure prompt justice to our citizens in these quarters.

I am here to-day as a guest. I was invited by a number of highly valued personal and political friends to partake with them of a public dinner, for the purpose of giving them an opportunity to pass the usual greeting of friends upon my return; of testifying their respect for my public services heretofore; and of exchanging congratulations upon the results of the late negotiation. It was at my instance that the proposed dinner took the form of this meeting, and instead of meeting them at the festive board, I agreed to meet them, and those who chose to meet me with them, here. Still, the general character of the meeting seems not to be changed. I am here as a guest; here to receive greetings and salutations for particular services, and not under any intimation or expectation that I should address the gentlemen who invited me or others here, upon subjects not suggested by themselves. It would not become me to use the occasion for any more general purpose. Because, although I have a design, at some time not far distant, to make known my

sentiments upon political matters generally, and upon the political state of the country and that of its several parties, yet I know very well that I should be trespassing beyond the bounds of politeness and propriety, should I enter upon this whole wide field now. I will not enter upon it, because the gentlemen who invited me entertain on many of these topics views different from my own, and they would very properly say, that they came here to meet Mr. Webster, to congratulate him upon the late negotiation, and to exchange sentiments upon matters about which they agreed with him; and that it was not in very correct taste for him to use the occasion to express opinions upon other subjects on which they differ. It is on that account that I shall forbear discussing political subjects at large, and shall endeavor to confine my remarks to what may be considered as affecting myself, directly or indirectly.

The Mayor was kind enough to say, that having, in his judgment, performed the duties of my own department to the satisfaction of my country, it might be left to me to take care of my own honor and reputation. I suppose that he meant to say, that in the present distracted state of the Whig party, and among the contrariety of opinions that prevail (if there be a contrariety of opinion) as to the course proper for *me* to pursue, the decision of that question might be left to myself. I am exactly of his opinion. I am quite of opinion that on a question touching my own honor and character, as I am to bear the consequences of the decision, I had a great deal better be trusted to make it. No man feels more highly the advantage of the advice of friends than I do; but on a question so delicate and important as that, I like to choose myself the friends who are to give me advice; and upon this subject, Gentlemen, I shall leave you as enlightened as I found you.

I give no pledges, I make no intimations, one way or the other; and I will be as free, when this day closes, to act as duty calls, as I was when the dawn of this day —— (Here Mr. Webster was interrupted by tremendous applause. When silence was restored he continued:)

There is a delicacy in the case, because there is always delicacy and regret when one feels obliged to differ from his friends; but there is no embarrassment. There is no embarrassment, because, if I see the path of duty before me, I have that within

me which will enable me to pursue it, and throw all embarrassment to the winds. A public man has no occasion to be embarrassed, if he is honest. Himself and his feelings should be to him as nobody and as nothing; the interest of his country must be to him as every thing; he must sink what is personal to himself, making exertions for his country; and it is his ability and readiness to do this which are to mark him as a great or as a little man in time to come.

There were many persons in September, 1841, who found great fault with my remaining in the President's Cabinet. You know, Gentlemen, that twenty years of honest, and not altogether undistinguished service in the Whig cause, did not save me from an outpouring of wrath, which seldom proceeds from Whig pens and Whig tongues against any body. I am, Gentlemen, a little hard to coax, but as to being driven, that is out of the question. I chose to trust my own judgment, and thinking I was at a post where I was in the service of the country, and could do it good, I staid there. And I leave it to you to-day to say, I leave it to my country to say, whether the country would have been better off if I had left also. I have no attachment to office. I have tasted of its sweets, but I have tasted of its bitterness. I am content with what I have achieved; I am more ready to rest satisfied with what is gained, than to run the risk of doubtful efforts for new acquisition.

I suppose I ought to pause here. (Cries of "Go on!") I ought, perhaps, to allude to nothing more, and I will not allude to any thing further than it may be supposed to concern myself, directly or by implication. Gentlemen, and Mr. Mayor, a most respectable convention of Whig delegates met in this place a few days since, and passed very important resolutions. There is no set of gentlemen in the Commonwealth, so far as I know them, who have more of my respect and regard. They are Whigs, but they are no better Whigs than I am. They have served the country in the Whig ranks; so have I, quite as long as most of them, though perhaps with less ability and success. Their resolutions on political subjects, as representing the Whigs of the State, are entitled to respect, so far as they were authorized to express opinion on those subjects, and no further. They were sent hither, as I supposed, to agree upon candidates for the offices of Governor and Lieutenant-Governor for the support of

the Whigs of Massachusetts; and if they had any authority to speak in the name of the Whigs of Massachusetts to any other purport or intent, I have not been informed of it. I feel very little disturbed by any of those proceedings, of whatever nature; but some of them appear to me to have been inconsiderate and hasty, and their point and bearing can hardly be mistaken. I notice among others, a declaration made, in behalf of all the Whigs of this Commonwealth, of "a full and final separation from the President of the United States." If those gentlemen saw fit to express their own sentiments to that extent, there was no objection. Whigs speak their sentiments everywhere; but whether they may assume a privilege to speak for others on a point on which those others have not given them authority, is another question. I am a Whig, I always have been a Whig, and I always will be one; and if there are any who would turn me out of the pale of that communion, let them see who will get out first. I am a Massachusetts Whig, a Faneuil Hall Whig, having breathed this air for five-and-twenty years, and meaning to breathe it, as long as my life is spared. I am ready to submit to all decisions of Whig conventions on subjects on which they are authorized to make decisions; I know that great party good and great public good can only be so obtained. But it is quite another question whether a set of gentlemen, however respectable they may be as individuals, shall have the power to bind me on matters which I have not agreed to submit to their decision at all.

"A full and final separation" is declared between the Whig party of Massachusetts and the President. That is the text: it requires a commentary. What does it mean? The President of the United States has three years of his term of office yet unexpired. Does this declaration mean, then, that during those three years all the measures of his administration are to be opposed by the great body of the Whig party of Massachusetts, whether they are right or wrong? There are great public interests which require his attention. If the President of the United States should attempt, by negotiation, or by earnest and serious application to Congress, to make some change in the present arrangements, such as should be of service to those interests of navigation which are concerned in the colonial trade, are the Whigs of Massachusetts to give him neither aid nor succor?

If the President of the United States shall direct the proper department to review the whole commercial policy of the United States, in respect of reciprocity in the indirect trade, to which so much of our tonnage is now sacrificed, if the amendment of this policy shall be undertaken by him, is there such a separation between him and the Whigs of Massachusetts as shall lead them and their representatives to oppose it? Do you know (there are gentlemen now here who do know) that a large proportion, I rather think more than one half, of the carrying trade between the empire of Brazil and the United States is enjoyed by tonnage from the North of Europe, in consequence of this ill-considered principle with regard to reciprocity. You might just as well admit them into the coasting trade. By this arrangement, we take the bread out of our children's mouths and give it to strangers. I appeal to you, Sir, (turning to Captain Benjamin Rich, who sat by him,) is not this true? (Mr Rich at once replied, True!) Is every measure of this sort, for the relief of such abuses, to be rejected? Are we to suffer ourselves to remain inactive under every grievance of this kind until these three years shall expire, and through as many more as shall pass until Providence shall bless us with more power of doing good than we have now?

Again, there are now in this State persons employed under government, allowed to be pretty good Whigs, still holding their offices; collectors, district attorneys, postmasters, marshals. What is to become of them in this separation? Which side are they to fall? Are they to resign? or is this resolution to be held up to government as an invitation or a provocation to turn them out? Our distinguished fellow-citizen, who, with so much credit to himself and to his country, represents our government in England,* — is *he* expected to come home, on this separation, and yield his place to his predecessor,† or to somebody else? And in regard to the individual who addresses you, — what do his brother Whigs mean to do with him? Where do they mean to place me? Generally, when a divorce takes place, the parties divide their children. I am anxious to know where, in the case of this divorce, I shall fall. This declaration announces a full and final separation between the

* Mr. Edward Everett. † Mr. Andrew Stevenson.

still further and faster diminishing the revenue itself. A sound revenue was one of those objects; and that it has been accomplished, our thanks and praise are due to the Congress that has just adjourned.

A third object was protection, protection incidental to revenue, or consequent upon revenue. Now as to that, Gentlemen, much has been done, and I hope it will be found that enough has been done. And for this, too, all the Whigs who supported that measure in Congress are entitled to high praise: they receive mine, and I hope they do yours; it is right that they should. But let us be just. The French rhetoricians have a maxim, that there is nothing beautiful that is not true; I am afraid that some of our jubilant oratory would hardly stand the test of this canon of criticism. It is not true that a majority, composed of Whigs, could be found, in either house, in favor of the tariff bill. More than thirty Whigs, many of them gentlemen of lead and influence, voted against the law, from beginning to end, on all questions, direct and indirect; and it is not pleasant to consider what would have been the state of the country, the treasury, and the government itself, at this moment, if the law actually passed, for revenue and for protection, had depended on Whig votes alone. After all, it passed the House of Representatives by a single vote; and there is a good deal of *éclat* about that single vote. But did not every gentleman who voted for it take the responsibility and deserve the honor of that single vote? Several gentlemen in the opposition thus befriended the bill; thus did our neighbor from the Middlesex District of this State,* voting for the tariff out and out, as steadily as did my honored friend, the member from this city.† We hear nothing of his "coming to the rescue," and yet he had that *one vote*, and held the tariff in his hand as absolutely as if he had had a presidential veto! And how was it in the Senate? It passed by one vote again there, and could not have passed at all without the assistance of the two Senators from Pennsylvania, of Mr. Williams of Maine, and of Mr. Wright of New York. Let us then admit the truth (and a lawyer may do that when it helps his case), that it was necessary that a large portion of the other party should come to the assistance of the

* Mr. Parmenter. † Mr. R. C. Winthrop.

Whigs to enable them to carry the tariff, and that, if this assistance had not been rendered, the tariff must have failed.

And this is a very important truth for New England. Her children, looking to their manufactures and industry for their livelihood, must rejoice to find the tariff, so necessary to these, no party question. Can they desire, can they wish, that such a great object as the protection of industry should become a party object, rising with party, and with the failure of the party that supported it going to the grave? This is a public, a national question. The tariff ought to be inwrought in the sentiments of all parties; and although I hope that the preëminence of Whig principles may be eternal, I wish to take bond and security, that we may make the protection of domestic industry more durable even than Whig supremacy.

Let us be true in another respect. This tariff has accomplished much, and is an honor to the men who passed it. But in regard to protection it has only restored the country to the state in which it was before the compromise act, and from which it fell under the operation of that act. It has repaired the consequences of that measure, and it has done *no more*. I may speak of the compromise act. My turn has come now. No measure ever passed Congress during my connection with that body that caused me so much grief and mortification. It was passed by a few friends joining the whole host of the enemy. I have heard much of the motives of that act. The personal motives of those that passed the act were, I doubt not, pure; and all public men are supposed to act from pure motives. But if by motives are meant the objects proposed by the act itself, and expressed in it, then I say, if those be the motives alluded to, they are worse than the act itself. The principle was bad, the measure was bad, the consequences were bad. Every circumstance, as well as every line of the act itself, shows that the design was to impose upon legislation a restraint that the Constitution had not imposed; to insert in the Constitution a new prohibitory clause, providing that, after the year 1842, no revenue should be collected except according to an absurd horizontal system, and none exceeding twenty per cent. It was then pressed through under the great emergency of the public necessities. But I may now recur to what I then said, namely, that its principle was false and dangerous, and that,

when its time came, it would rack and convulse our system. I said we should not get rid of it without throes and spasms. Has not this been as predicted? We have felt the spasms and throes of this convulsion; but we have at last gone through them, and begin to breathe again. It is something that that act is at last got rid of; and the present tariff is deserving in this, that it is specific and discriminating, that it holds to common sense, and rejects and discards the principles of the compromise act, I hope for ever.

Another great and principal object of the revolution of 1840 was a restoration of the currency. Our troubles did not begin with want of money in the treasury, or under the sapping and mining operation of the compromise act. They are of earlier date. The trouble and distress of the country began with the *currency* in 1833, and broke out with new severity in 1837. Other causes of difficulty have since arisen, but the first great shock was a shock on the currency; and from the effect of this the country is not yet relieved. I hope the late act may yield competent revenue, and am sure it will do much for protection. But until you provide a better currency, so that you may have a universal one, of equal and general value throughout the land, I am hard to be persuaded that we shall see the day of our former prosperity. Currency, accredited currency, and easy and cheap internal exchanges, — until these things be obtained, depend upon it, the country will find no adequate relief.

And now, fellow-citizens, I will say a word or two on the history of the transactions on this subject. At the special session of Congress, the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Ewing, arranged a plan for a national bank. That plan was founded upon the idea of a large capital, furnished mainly by private subscriptions, and it included branches for local discounts. I need not advert, Gentlemen, to the circumstances under which this scheme was drawn up, and received, as it did, the approbation of the President and Cabinet, as the best thing that could be done. I need not remind you, that he whom we had all agreed should hold the second place in the government had been called to the head of it. I need not say that he held opinions wholly different from mine on the subjects which now came before us. But those opinions were fixed, and therefore it was thought the part of wisdom and prudence not to see how strong a case might

be made against the President, but to get along as well as we might. With such views, Mr. Ewing presented his plan to Congress. As most persons will remember, the clause allowing the bank to establish branches provided that those branches might be placed in any State which should give its consent. I have no idea that there is any necessity for such a restriction. I believe Congress has the power to establish the branches without, as well as with, the consent of the States. But that clause, at most, was theoretical. I never could find any body who could show any practical mischief resulting from it. Its opponents went upon the theory, which I do not exactly accord with, that an omission to exercise a power, in any case, amounts to a surrender of that power. At any rate, it was the best thing that could be done; and its rejection was the commencement of the disastrous dissensions between the President and Congress.

Gentlemen, it was exceedingly doubtful at the time when that plan was prepared whether the capital would be subscribed. But we did what we could about it. We asked the opinion of the leading merchants of the principal commercial cities. They were invited to Washington to confer with us. They expressed doubts whether the bank could be put into operation, but they expressed hopes also, and they pledged themselves to do the best they could to advance it. And as the commercial interests were in its favor, as the administration was new and fresh and popular, and the people were desirous to have something done, a great earnestness was felt that that bill should be tried.

It was sent to the Senate at the Senate's request, and by the Senate it was rejected. Another bill was reported in the Senate, without the provision requiring the consent of the States to branches, was discussed for six weeks or two months, and then could not pass even a Whig Senate. Here was the origin of distrust, disunion, and resentment.

I will not pursue the unhappy narrative of the latter part of the session of 1841. Men had begun to grow excited and angry and resentful. I expressed the opinion, at an early period, to all those to whom I was entitled to speak, that it would be a great deal better to forbear further action at present. That opinion, as expressed to the two Whig Senators from Massachusetts, is before the public. I wished Congress to give time for consultation

to take place, for harmony to be restored, because I looked for no good, except from the united and harmonious action of all the branches of the Whig government. I suppose that counsel was not good, certainly it was not followed. I need not add the comment.

This brings us, as far as concerns the questions of currency, to the last session of Congress. Early in that session the Secretary of the Treasury sent in a plan of an exchequer. It met with little favor in either House, and therefore it is necessary for me, Gentlemen, lest the whole burden fall on others, to say that it had my hearty, sincere, and entire approbation. Gentlemen, I hope that I have not manifested through my public life a very overweening confidence in my own judgment, or a very unreasonable unwillingness to accept the views of others. But there are some subjects on which I feel entitled to pay some respect to my own opinion. The subject of currency, Gentlemen, has been the study of my life. Thirty years ago, a little before my entrance into the House of Representatives, the questions connected with a mixed currency, involving the proper relation of paper to specie, and the proper means of restricting an excessive issue of paper, came to be discussed by the most acute and well-disciplined understandings in England in Parliament. At that time, during the suspension of specie payments by the bank, when paper was fifteen per cent. below par, Mr. Vansittart had presented his celebrated resolution, declaring that a bank-note was still worth the value expressed on its face; that the bank-note had not depreciated, but that the price of bullion had risen. Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh espoused this view, as we know, and it was opposed by the close reasoning of Huskisson, the powerful logic of Horner, and the practical sagacity and common sense of Alexander Baring, now Lord Ashburton. The study of those debates made me a bullionist. They convinced me that paper could not circulate safely in any country, any longer than it was immediately redeemable at the place of its issue. Coming into Congress the very next year, or the next but one after, and finding the finances of the country in a most deplorable condition, I then and ever after devoted myself, in preference to all other public topics, to the consideration of the questions relating to them. I believe I have read every thing of value that has been published since on those

questions, on either side of the Atlantic. I have studied by close observation the laws of paper currency, as they have exhibited themselves in this and in other countries, from 1811 down to the present time. I have expressed my opinions at various times in Congress, and some of the predictions which I have made have not been altogether falsified by subsequent events. I must therefore be permitted, Gentlemen, without yielding to any flippant newspaper paragraph, or to the hasty ebullitions of debate in a public assembly, to say, that I believe the plan for an exchequer, as presented to Congress at its last session, is the *best* measure, the *only* measure for the adoption of Congress and the trial of the people. I am ready to stake my reputation upon it, and that is all that I have to stake. I am ready to stake my reputation, that, if this Whig Congress will take that measure and give it a fair trial, within three years it will be admitted by the whole American people to be the most beneficial measure of any sort ever adopted in this country, the Constitution only excepted.

I mean that they should take it as it was when it came from the Cabinet, not as it looked when the committees of Congress had laid their hands upon it. For when the committees of Congress had struck out the proviso respecting exchange, it was not worth a rush; it was not worth the parchment it would be engrossed upon. The great desire of this country is a general currency, a facility of exchange; a currency which shall be the same for you and for the people of Alabama and Louisiana, and a system of exchange which shall equalize credit between them and you, with the rapidity and facility with which steam conveys men and merchandise. That is what the country wants, what you want; and you have not got it. You have not got it, you cannot get it, but by some adequate provision of government. Exchange, ready exchange, that will enable a man to turn his New Orleans means into money to-day, (as we have had in better times millions a year exchanged, at only three quarters of one per cent.,) is what is wanted. How are we to obtain this? A Bank of the United States founded on a private subscription is out of the question. That is an obsolete idea. The country and the condition of things have changed. Suppose that a bank were chartered with a capital of fifty millions, to be raised by private subscription. Would it not be out

of all possibility to find the money? Who would subscribe? What would you get for shares? And as for the local discount, do you wish it? Do you, in State Street, wish that the nation should send millions of untaxed banking capital hither to increase your discounts? What then shall we do? People who are waiting for power to make a Bank of the United States may as well postpone all attempts to benefit the country to the incoming of the Jews.

What, then, shall we do? Let us turn to this plan of the exchequer, brought forward last year. It was assailed from all quarters. One gentleman did say, I believe, that by some possibility some good might come out of it, but in general it met with a different opposition from every different class. Some said it would be a perfectly lifeless machine, — that it was no system at all, — that it would do nothing, for good or evil; others thought that it had a great deal too much vitality, admitting that it would answer the purpose perfectly well for which it was designed, but fearing that it would increase the executive power: thus making it at once King Log and King Serpent. One party called it a ridiculous imbecility; the other, a dangerous giant, that might subvert the Constitution. These varied arguments, contradicting, if not refuting, one another, convinced me of one thing at least, — that the bill would not be adopted, nor even temperately and candidly considered. And it was not. In a manner quite unusual, it was discussed, assailed, denounced, before it was allowed to take the course of reference and examination.

The difficulties we meet in carrying out our system of constitutional government are indeed extraordinary. The Constitution was intended as an instrument of great political good; but we sometimes so dispute its meaning, that we cannot use it at all. One man will not have a bank, without the power of local discount, against the consent of the States; for that, he insists, would break the Constitution. Another will not have a bank with such a power, because he thinks that would break the Constitution. A third will not have an exchequer, with authority to deal in exchanges, because that would increase executive influence, and so might break the Constitution. And between them all, we are like the boatman who, in the midst of rocks and currents and whirlpools, will not pull one stroke for safety,

lest he break his oar. Are we now looking for the time when we can charter a United States Bank with a large private subscription? When will that be? When confidence is restored. Are we, then, to do nothing to save the vessel from sinking, till the chances of the winds and waves have landed us on the shore? He is more sanguine than I am, who thinks that the time will soon come when the Whigs have more power to work effectually for the good of the country than they now have. The voice of patriotism calls upon them not to postpone, but to act at this moment, at the very next session; to make the best of their means, and to try. You say that the administration is responsible; why not, then, try the plan it has recommended. If it fails, let the President bear the responsibility. If you will not try this plan, why not propose something else?

Gentlemen, in speaking of events that have happened, I ought to say, and will, since I am making a full and free communication, that there is no one of my age, and I am no longer very young, who has written or spoken more against the abuse and indiscreet use of the veto power than I have. And there is no one whose opinions upon this subject are less changed. I presume it is universally known, that I have advised against the use of the veto power on every occasion when it has been used since I have been in the Cabinet. But I am, nevertheless, not willing to join those who seem more desirous to make out a case against the President, than of serving their country to the extent of their ability, vetoes notwithstanding. Indeed, at the close of the extra session, the received doctrine of many seemed to be, that they would undertake nothing until they could amend the Constitution so as to do away with this power. This was mere mockery. If we were now reforming the Constitution, we might wish for some, I do not say what, guards and restraints upon this power more than the Constitution at present contains; but no convention would recommend striking it out altogether. Have not the people of New York lately amended their constitution, so as to require, in certain legislative action, votes of two thirds? and is not this same restriction in daily use in the national House of Representatives itself. in the case of suspension of the rules? This constitutional power, therefore, is no greater a restraint than this body imposes on itself. But it is utterly hopeless to look for such an amend-

ment; who expects to live to see its day? And to give up all practical efforts, and to go on with a general idea that the Constitution must be amended before any thing can be done, was, I will not say trifling, but treating the great necessities of the people as of quite too little importance. This Congress accomplished, in this regard, nothing for the people. The exchequer plan which was submitted to it will accomplish some of the objects of the people, and especially the Whig people. I am confident of it; I know it. When a mechanic makes a tool, an axe, a saw, or a plane, and knows that the temper is good and the parts are well proportioned, he knows that it will answer its purpose. And I know that this plan will answer its purpose.

There are other objects which ought not to be neglected, among which is one of such importance that I will not now pass it by; I mean, the mortifying state of the public credit of this country at this time. I cannot help thinking, that if the statesmen of a former age were among us, if Washington were here, if John Adams, and Hamilton, and Madison were here, they would be deeply concerned and soberly thoughtful about the present state of the public credit of the country. In the position I fill, it becomes my duty to read, generally with pleasure, but sometimes with pain, communications from our public agents abroad. It is distressing to hear them speak of *their* distress at what they see and hear of the scorn and contumely with which the American character and American credit are treated abroad. Why, at this very time, we have a loan in the market, which, at the present rate of money and credit, ought to command in Europe one hundred and twenty-five per cent. Can we sell a dollar of it? And how is it with the credit of our own Commonwealth? Does it not find itself affected in its credit by the general state of the credit of the country? Is there nobody ready to make a movement in this matter? Is there not a man in our councils large enough, comprehensive enough in his views, to undertake at least to *present* this case before the American people, and thus do something to restore the public character for morals and honesty?

There are in the country some men who are indiscreet enough to talk of *repudiation*, — to advise their fellow-citizens to *repudiate* public debt. Does repudiation pay a debt? Does it discharge the debtor? Can it so modify a debt that it shall not be

always binding, in law as well as in morals? No, Gentlemen; repudiation does nothing but add a sort of disrepute to acknowledged inability. It is our duty, so far as is in our power, to rouse the public feeling on the subject; to maintain and assert the universal principles of law and justice, and the importance of preserving public faith and credit. People say that the intelligent capitalists of Europe ought to distinguish between the United States government and the State governments. So they ought; but, Gentlemen, what does all this amount to? Does not the general government comprise the same people who make up the State governments? May not these Europeans ask us how long it may be before the national councils will repudiate public obligations?

The doctrine of repudiation has inflicted upon us a stain which we ought to feel worse than a wound; and the time has come when every man ought to address himself soberly and seriously to the correction of this great existing evil. I do not undertake to say what the Constitution allows Congress to do in the premises. I will only say, that if that great fund of the public domain properly and in equity belongs, as is maintained, to the States themselves, there are some means, by regular and constitutional laws, to enable and induce the States to save their own credit and the credit of the country.

Gentlemen, I have detained you much too long. I have wished to say, that, in my judgment, there remain certain important objects to engage our public and private attention, in the national affairs of the country. These are, the settlement of the remaining questions between ourselves and England; the great questions relating to the reciprocity principle; those relating to colonial trade; the most absorbing questions of the currency, and those relating to the great subject of the restoration of the national character and the public faith; these are all objects to which I am willing to devote myself, both in public and in private life. I do not expect that much of public service remains to be done by me; but I am ready, for the promotion of these objects, to act with sober men of any party, and of all parties. I am ready to act with men who are free from that great danger that surrounds all men of all parties, — the danger that patriotism itself, warmed and heated in party contests, will run into partisanship. I believe that, among the sober men of this coun-

try, there is a growing desire for more moderation of party feeling, more predominance of purely public considerations, more honest and general union of well-meaning men of all sides to uphold the institutions of the country and carry them forward.

In the pursuit of these objects, in public life or in a private station, I am willing to perform the part assigned to me, and to give them, with hearty good-will and zealous effort, all that may remain to me of strength and life.

The Northeastern Boundary

Introductory Note

PENDING the negotiation of the treaty of Washington, in the spring and summer of 1842, Mr. Webster was made acquainted with the existence at Paris of a copy of D'Anville's map of America on a small scale, on which the boundary between the British Provinces and the United States was indicated by a red line, in a manner favorable to the British claim. This map (which was soon extensively known as the *red-line map*) had been discovered by President Sparks in the foreign office at Paris. He also found a letter from Dr. Franklin to the Count de Vergennes, from which it appeared that the boundary had been delineated by Dr. Franklin upon some map, at the request of the Count, and for his information. There was no proof, however, that this letter referred to the map discovered by Mr. Sparks.

After the negotiation of the treaty, and the publication of the debates in the Senate on the question of its ratification, much importance was attached by the opposition press in England to this map, as proving incontestably the soundness of the British claims relative to boundary. It was also absurdly made a matter of reproach against Mr. Webster, that he had not, as soon as he became acquainted with the existence of this map, communicated it to Lord Ashburton.

So conclusive was this piece of evidence deemed in England in favor of the British claim, and so much importance was attached to it in the debates in Parliament, that it became necessary for Sir Robert Peel, by way of offset, to refer to another map not before publicly known to exist; namely, the copy of Mitchell's map which had been used by Mr. Oswald, the British commissioner for negotiating the provisional treaty, and by him sent home to his government. This map had been preserved in the library of George the Third, and with that library was sent to the British Museum. On this map the line as claimed by the United States is boldly and distinctly traced throughout its whole extent, and the words "Boundary as described by Mr. Oswald" written in four places with great plainness. It was asserted by Lord Brougham in the House of Peers, that these words are in the handwriting of George the Third.

The writer of this note was assured by Lord Aberdeen, that he had no knowledge of the existence of this map till after the conclusion of the treaty of Washington. He was also assured by Lord Ashburton, that he was equally ignorant of it till after his return from America. It is supposed to have been accidentally discovered in the British Museum, and, under Lord Melbourne's administration, to have been placed in the hands of Mr. Featherstonhaugh, with other documents and materials relative to the boundary, although no allusion to this map is made in his report. He was directed by Lord Aberdeen to hand over to Lord Ashburton all the documents and maps in his possession, but this, by far the most important of them all, was not among those transferred by him.

At about the same time, a copy of Mitchell's map was found among the papers of Mr. Jay, one of the American commissioners for negotiating the treaty of 1783. It contains a line drawn from the mouth to the source of the St. John's, which is described upon the map as "Mr. Oswald's line." It no doubt represents the boundary line as offered by Mr. Oswald on the 8th of October, 1782, but not agreed to by the British government.

On the discovery of Mr. Jay's map, a meeting of the New York Historical Society was held, at which a very learned memoir on the Northeastern Boundary was read by the venerable Mr. Gallatin, who had acted as one of the commissioners for preparing the American statement to be submitted to the King of the Netherlands as arbiter, and whose knowledge of the subject was not surpassed, if equalled, by that of any other person.

At the time this meeting was held, the knowledge of Oswald's map had not reached America. The simultaneous discovery of these two maps in England and the United States, the most important in their bearing on the controversy of all the maps produced in the discussion, — one of them in fact (Oswald's) decisive as to the point at issue, — a discovery not made till after the conclusion of the treaty of 1842, — is among the most singular incidents in the history of the protracted negotiations which resulted in that treaty. Taken together, and in connection with the official correspondence, they leave no doubt that Mr. Jay's map exhibits the proposed line of the 8th of October, 1782, and that Oswald's map exhibits the line of the treaty of 1783, and which is that always contended for by the United States.

Mr. Webster, happening to be in New York, was present by invitation at the meeting of the Historical Society above alluded to, and after the reading of Mr. Gallatin's memoir, having been called upon by its Vice-President, Mr. W. Beach Lawrence, made the following speech.

The Northeastern Boundary*

MR. PRESIDENT: — I have had very great gratification in listening to your dissertation on the topics connected with the newly found map of the late Mr. Jay. I came here to be instructed, and I have been instructed, by an exhibition of the results of your information, and consideration of that subject. I came, however, without the slightest expectation of being called on to say any thing upon that or any other topic connected with the treaty, in the negotiation of which it was my fortune to bear a part. I am free to say, Sir, that the map which hangs over your head does appear to be proved, beyond any other documents now producible, to have been before the commissioners in Paris in 1782.† That fact, and the lines and marks which the map bears, lead to inferences of some importance. If they be not such inferences as remove all doubts from these contested topics, they may yet have no inconsiderable tendency towards rebutting or controlling other inferences of an opposite character, drawn, or attempted to be drawn, from similar sources.

Before making any particular remarks upon the subject of the several maps, I will advert to two or three general ideas, which it is always necessary to carry along with us in any process of reasoning upon this subject. Let us remember, then, in the first place, that the treaty of 1783 granted nothing to the United States, — nothing. It granted no political rights. It granted not one inch of territory. The political rights of the United States

* Remarks made at a Meeting of the New York Historical Society, on the 15th of April, 1843.

† It must be particularly borne in mind, in reading this speech, that intelligence of the discovery of Oswald's map, and of the line marked upon it, had not yet reached America.

had been asserted by the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and stood, and stand, and always will stand, upon that Declaration. The territorial limits of the several States stood upon their respective ancient charters and grants from the British crown, going back to the times of the Stuarts. The treaty of peace of 1783 acknowledged, it did not grant, the independence of the United States. It acknowledged the independence of the United States as they then existed, with the territories that belonged to them, respectively, as colonies. That which has since become, or afterwards became, the subject of dispute, was territory claimed by Great Britain on the one hand, and by Massachusetts on the other. The question was the definition of the boundary between the English Provinces of Canada and Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, and Massachusetts. But as, by the acknowledgment of the independence of the United States, England had put herself in a condition to treat diplomatically with the whole Union, this matter of disputed boundary between England and the State of Massachusetts thenceforward became a question of boundary between the United States and England; because the treaty-making power necessarily devolved upon the whole Union, as well according to the Articles of Confederation, as, afterwards, according to the Constitution of the United States. Well, then, the question was, What is, or what was, the boundary between the State of Massachusetts and the British Province of Nova Scotia? Nova Scotia did not join in the war of independence, and did not separate from the mother country; Massachusetts did, and the question therefore arose, What was the boundary between them?

Now, in order to a general understanding of that, we must go a little back in the history of political occurrences on this continent. The war of 1756 brought on a general conflict in America between England on the one side, and France and Spain on the other. From that period till the peace of 1763, which terminated the war, Spain possessed Florida, and Canada belonged to the French. By the peace of Paris, in 1763, Canada on the north, and Florida on the south, were ceded by France and Spain, respectively, to Great Britain. Other conquests were made by British power in the West Indies; and the British ministry, in October of that year, by the celebrated proclamation of the 7th of that month, defined the boundaries of these re-

spective Colonies thus obtained from France and Spain; and so far as the present subject is concerned, it may be enough to say, that the British government, in issuing the proclamation of 1763, defining, describing, and settling the boundaries of the newly acquired Province of Canada or Quebec, asserted as the boundary of Canada a line against which Massachusetts had contended with France during the preceding thirty or forty years. That is to say, the Colony of Massachusetts had insisted that her territory ran to the north bank of the St. Lawrence. She claimed not *to* the highlands, but *over* them *down to the river*. England had never discountenanced this claim of her colony as against France. England, then becoming owner of Canada by conquest and subsequent cession, described its boundaries as she desired to fix them, by the celebrated line of "highlands." According to the proclamation, the line from Lake Nepissing (at the northwest) was to cross the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain in the 45th degree of north latitude, and thence to proceed along the highlands which divide the rivers that empty themselves into the St. Lawrence from those which fall into the sea.

Massachusetts complained of the proclamation of 1763 as taking into Canada what she had insisted on as matter of her own right. Mr. Borland, the Massachusetts agent, presented it strongly to the British ministry, as an invasion of the territorial rights of that Colony. It happened, however, that in the interior of Maine, near the Kennebec, there was a tract of country to which it was alleged the crown of England had rightful claim. There grew up, therefore, a tacit consent, soon after the peace of 1763, between the crown of England and Massachusetts, that, if the former would forbear to assert any right to this territory, included within the general limits of the Province of Maine, Massachusetts would not press the matter respecting the boundary between that Province and Canada. Well, under these circumstances, when the peace of 1783 was made, the question was to ascertain what was the boundary between Massachusetts and Nova Scotia. The country was a wilderness, and the line was not easily defined. Many historical documents, the proclamation of 1763, and many prior and subsequent proceedings of the governments, were resorted to. Now I suppose that the object of the commissioners of 1783 was to

ascertain what was the existing line, and not to run any new line, as England, being possessor of Canada by conquest from France, claimed under the French, and, according to general principles, would be bound by what had been the claims of her grantor. Now it is certain, that whilst the French owned Canada, down to the very day of its cession to Great Britain by the peace of 1763, the French maps, so far as I know, with hardly an exception, if any, represent the divisional line between Massachusetts and Nova Scotia exactly according to the line contended for by us. The French maps which gave another representation were the production of a subsequent epoch. It was fair, therefore, to say to England, "You must claim under your grantors, and according to their claim."

The provisions of the treaty of 1783 undoubtedly meant to ascertain what the line was as it then existed, and so to describe it. In regard to the map now presented, supposing the fact to be as I take it to be, that it was before the commissioners, because it has Mr. Jay's memorandum upon it, and connecting it with the proposition of the British minister of the 8th of October, 1782, several things seem very fairly to be deducible; and an important one is, that the northwest angle of Nova Scotia and the sources of the River St. John are identical according to this map and according to Mr. Oswald's proposition. How comes it, then, the northwestern angle of Nova Scotia and the sources of the St. John being identical in the minds of men of that day, that that idea has not been followed up? And this leads to one of the questions about which it is impossible to say that any one can lay down beforehand any positive rule, or decide fairly, without a full knowledge of the facts of the particular case. The commissioners proceeded upon a conviction of the accuracy and correctness of the geographical delineation upon the paper on their table. Should it afterwards turn out, either that that delineation was in some small degree incorrect, or that it was materially incorrect, or that it was altogether incorrect, what is the rule for such a case, or how far are mutual and common mistakes of this kind to be corrected? On the face of Mitchell's map, (and a copy of that map was before the commissioners, as all admit,) the Madawaska is laid down as a north and south line, or a river running from the north to the south. Mr. Oswald accordingly says, "beginning at the northwest angle of Nova Scotia,"

and then tracing the boundary to the Mississippi, down that river to latitude thirty-one north, and so to the sea, and along the sea; and then says, the eastern boundary shall be the River St. John, from its source to its mouth. He goes, therefore, on the idea, evidently, that the source of the St. John is at the northwest angle of Nova Scotia; or else he leaves a *hiatus* in his description. The fact, as stated by you, Sir, is, that this delineation of the Madawaska was erroneous. It is not a north and south river. Errors in the calculation of the longitude had led to giving it a north and south direction on the map, whereas it should have had a northwest and southeast direction; and this error carries it, in order to conform to the fact, from forty to fifty miles farther to the west. Now, of the various questions which we may reasonably suppose to arise in a case of this sort, one would be, whether, in a case of mutual mistake of that kind, founded on a mutual misapprehension, this error was to be corrected, or whether the parties were to be bound by it, let the true course of that river be what it might. These questions are no longer of great importance to us, since the whole matter has been settled; but they may have their influence, and are worthy of consideration in an historical point of view.

The conflict of these maps is undoubtedly a pretty remarkable circumstance. The great mass of contemporaneous maps are favorable to the claims of the United States, and the remarks read by the President of the Society are most cogent to evince this. The treaty negotiated in Paris by Mr. Oswald, on the part of the British government, met with great opposition in Parliament. It was opposed on the very ground that it made a line of boundary "exceedingly inconvenient to Great Britain"; or, as a leading member of Parliament said, that it made the United States masters both of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; and maps were published exhibiting this line exactly as claimed by the United States. These maps accompanied the Parliamentary papers and debates. Now, it is very extraordinary, it would be deemed almost incredible, that, if these maps, thus making out a case on which so much stress had been laid against the British ministry and their negotiation, had been erroneous, nobody in the Foreign Office, nor the minister, nor Mr. Oswald himself, should have one word to suggest against the accuracy of these maps. They defended the treaty and beau-

dary as presented on the maps, not going on the ground at all that those maps exhibited any erroneous presentation. Nevertheless, it is a matter of historical notoriety, that, from the time of the conclusion of that treaty till our day, it had been impossible to bring the two governments to any agreement on the matter. That on the words of the treaty, on the fair and necessary import of the words of the treaty, the case is, and has always been, with the United States, I very much doubt if any intelligent Englishman at this day would be found ready to deny. The argument has been, not that it is possible to show the line anywhere else, not that it is possible to bring the northwest angle of Nova Scotia this side of all the waters that run into the St. John, — I suppose no man of sense and common candor would undertake to maintain seriously such a proposition as that, — but the argument always has been that which was successfully pressed upon the king of Holland, that there is a difficulty in ascertaining the meaning of these words, when we look to localities, the highlands, the streams, and face of the country; and that difficulty led his Majesty, as difficulties of a similar character in other cases lead referees and arbitrators, into the notion of "splitting the difference," or compromising the claim, and drawing a line between that claimed by us, on the one hand, and that claimed by the British government, on the other. The English government, therefore, has always proceeded less upon the terms of the treaty themselves, than on those external considerations, and especially upon that of the great inconvenience of such a line of demarcation; and has founded upon that, as its natural result, another inference, the great improbability that England would have agreed to a line, unnecessarily, which separated her own provinces from one another, and made the communication between them dependent on the will and pleasure of a foreign power. The treaty of Washington, and the negotiations which preceded it, were entered into in a spirit of compromise and settlement.

When the present administration came into power, it determined, that, as an arbitration conducted with the greatest diligence, ability, and learning, on the part of the United States, had failed, and, as the matter was likely at all events to terminate in compromise at last, it might be quite as wise for the parties to attempt to compromise it themselves, on such con-

siderations as they might see fit to adopt. Rather wiser this, indeed, you must surely admit, than to refer it to the consideration of a third power. It was upon that principle and in that spirit that the negotiations of 1842 were entered into. It was altogether in that amicable and rational spirit in which one neighbor says to another, according to the Scripture, "Let us agree with our adversary while we are in the way with him." Or as one might suppose two landed proprietors would have done, whose contiguous estates had projecting corners, and irregular lines, producing inconvenience in the management of plantations and farms. These things, in private life, are adjusted, not on the principle that one shall get all he can and grant nothing, or yield every thing and get nothing, but on the principle that the arrangement shall be for the mutual convenience and advantage of both parties, if the terms can be made fair, and equal, and honorable to both.

I believe, or at least I trust with great humility, that the judgment of the country will ultimately be, that the arrangement in this case was not an objectionable one. In the first place, I am willing to maintain everywhere, that the States of Massachusetts and Maine are better off this day than if Lord Ashburton had not signed the treaty, but had signed, in behalf of his government, a relinquishment of the claim of England to every square foot of the territory in dispute, and gone home. These States get more by the opening of the navigation of the rivers, and by the other benefits obtained through the treaty, than all the territory north of the St. John is worth, according to any estimate any one has yet been pleased to make of it. And as to the United States, if we can trust the highest military judgment in the country, if we can trust the general sense of intelligent persons acquainted with the subject, if we can trust our own common sense on looking to the map, an object of great importance has been attained for the United States and the State of New York, by the settlement of the question relative to the forty-fifth degree of north latitude, from Vermont to the St. Lawrence across the outlet of Lake Champlain. At the same time that these are gains or advantages, it does not follow, because this whole arrangement is highly advantageous to the States of Massachusetts and Maine, of great importance to the United States, and particularly useful to the States of New

York, Vermont, and New Hampshire, that therefore it must be disadvantageous or dishonorable to the other party to the treaty. By no means. It is a narrow and selfish, a crafty and mean spirit, which supposes that in things of this sort there can be nothing gained on one side without a corresponding loss on the other. Such arrangements may be, and always should be, for the mutual advantage of all parties. England has no reason to complain. She has obtained all she wanted, a reasonable boundary and a fair communication, a "convenient" communication and line of intercourse between her own provinces. Who is therefore to complain? Massachusetts and Maine, by the unanimous vote of all their agents, have adopted the treaty. It has been ratified by the English government. And though in party times, and in contests of men, some little dust may be thrown into the air, and some little excitement of the political elements may be produced occasionally, yet, so far as we know, no considerable discontent exists on the subject. How far the United States consider themselves benefited by it, let the votes of the two houses of Congress decide. A greater majority, I will undertake to say, was never given, in either house, in favor of any treaty, from the foundation of the government to the present time.

With respect, Sir, to the publication of Mr. Featherstonhaugh, and the tone of sundry articles in the London press, concerning the Paris map, I hope nobody supposes, so far as the government of the United States is concerned, that these things are exciting any sensation at Washington. Mr. Featherstonhaugh does not alarm us for our reputation. Assuming that there must either be a second arbitration or a settlement by compromise, finding that no arbitration which did not end in a compromise would be successful in settling the dispute, the government thought it its duty to invite the attention of the two States immediately concerned to the subject, — to ask them to take part in negotiations about to be entered into, with an assurance that no line of boundary should be agreed to without their consent, and without their consent, also, to all the conditions and stipulations of the treaty respecting the boundary. To this the two States agreed, with the limitation upon the consent of their agents, that, with regard to both States, it should be unanimous. In this state of things, undoubtedly it was the

duty of the government of the United States to lay before these States thus admitted into the negotiations all the information in its power. Every office in Washington was ransacked, every book of authority consulted, the whole history of all the negotiations, from the treaty of Paris downward, was produced, and among the rest this discovery in Paris, to go for what it was worth. If these afforded any evidences to their minds to produce a conviction that it might be used to obscure their rights, to lead an arbitration into an erroneous, unjust compromise, that was all for their consideration. The map was submitted as evidence, together with all the other proofs and documents in the case, without the slightest reservation on the part of the government of the United States. I must confess that I did not think it a very urgent duty on my part to go to Lord Ashburton and tell him that I had found a bit of doubtful evidence in Paris, out of which he might perhaps make something to the prejudice of our claims, and from which he could set up higher claims for himself, or throw further uncertainty over the whole matter.

I will detain you, Sir, by no remarks on any other part of the subject. Indeed, I had no expectation of being called upon to speak on the subject, in regard to which my own situation is a delicate one. I shall be quite satisfied if the general judgment of the country shall be, in the first place, that nothing disreputable to the Union, nothing prejudicial to its interests in regard to the line of boundary, has been done in the treaty; and in the next place, and above all things, that a fair, honorable, manly disposition has been manifested by the government in settling the question, and putting an end to a controversy which has disturbed the relations of the country for fifty years, not always without some danger of breaking the public peace, often with the effect of disturbing commercial intercourse, spreading distrust between those having daily dealings with one another, and always tending to excite alarm, jealousy, and suspicion.

Convention at Andover

Introductory Note

The annual election in the autumn of 1843 was conducted with great spirit in Massachusetts. Large conventions came together in several of the counties of the Commonwealth. Among them, that which met at Andover on the 9th of November, composed of delegates from all the towns in Essex County, and attended by many persons from the neighboring parts of the State, was one of the largest and most animated. The presence of Mr. Webster had been requested by special invitation from a committee of the citizens of Andover, immediately charged with the arrangements for the day. He was accompanied by a large number of personal and political friends from Boston. The place of meeting was a sequestered dell of a circular form, partly surrounded and sheltered by the native forest, about a quarter of a mile from the village, where a platform had been erected in front of the amphitheatrical slope, which furnished accommodation to a very large audience.

The meeting was called to order by Hon. Stephen C. Phillips of Salem, on whose motion William Stevens, Esq., of Andover, was chosen to preside over the Convention. After a few appropriate remarks from the chair introducing the business of the day, Mr. Phillips addressed the Convention at considerable length and with great ability, and concluded by moving a series of resolutions, setting forth with much power the principles of the Whig party and the objects to be effected at the coming election. The concluding resolution was in the following terms: —

"*Resolved*, That while regarding ourselves as especially engaged in the defence of the Constitution, we welcome on this occasion the much-desired presence of the great Defender; that we submit to his hands the responsible task of repelling all open or insidious attacks upon this palladium of our rights; and that we shall rejoice once more to hear from his lips the counsels of wisdom and the exhortations of patriotism."

After the enthusiastic cheering had subsided with which this resolu-

tion had been received, Mr. Webster was introduced to the meeting and delivered the following speech. The Rev. Professor Stuart, of the Theological Seminary at Andover, having taken an active part in all the arrangements of the day, the pamphlet edition of the Speech was dedicated to him by Mr. Webster in the following letter.*

"*Boston, November* 13, 1843.

"My dear Sir, — At the suggestion of friends, I have looked over the printed reports of my remarks at Andover, for the purpose of publication, in a pamphlet, with some of the papers and extracts which I read, or to which I referred, put into an Appendix.

"I doubt, my dear Sir, whether, at this season of the year, and under the circumstances, I should have gone to Andover to address a large collection of people, if a disposition to comply with your own personal wishes, so kindly expressed, had not formed a large part of the inducement.

"Will you allow me now, as a manifestation of my esteem and regard, to present the pamphlet in this public manner to you; and to avail myself of the opportunity for expressing the gratification which I feel in knowing, not only your intelligent and warm regard for the maintenance of the institutions of the country, but also, that amidst the duties of your chair, and the labor which you are known to bestow on the deeper studies belonging to your profession, you still find time to acquaint yourself extensively with its great and leading interests.

"Daniel Webster.

"To Rev. Professor Moses Stuart, Andover."

* The topics of this speech, and Mr. Webster's political course generally, were made the subject of two very able letters written by Professor Stuart and published about this time in a pamphlet form.

Convention at Andover*

It is not without considerable reluctance, fellow-citizens, that I present myself before this meeting to-day. It had been my purpose to abstain, for the time to come, from all public addresses before such vast assemblages. The invitation, however, came from sources which I so much respect, and appeared to urge my attendance with so much earnestness, that it was not in my yielding nature to withhold my consent. And that consent I cannot regret, when I look around me and before me, and see such a collection from Andover, from all parts of this county, and from the adjacent counties.

Gentlemen, I concur most zealously in the hope of the election of George N. Briggs and John Reed to the offices of Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of the Commonwealth, and am ready to perform any duty towards the accomplishment of what we all desire. I do not propose, on this occasion, any extended discussion of State politics; but I may say, generally, that I wish to see Massachusetts restored to what she has been, and characteristically is. In the proceedings of last year, I have seen much that does not belong to Massachusetts; much that has no flavor, no relish, of the Old Bay State about it. Gentlemen, I entertain not a particle of doubt that the good sense and good feelings of the people, when once aroused, — and they are now aroused, — will accomplish all that patriotism can desire, to this end. The proof of this I see, not in a noisy and vaporing spirit among the people, but in the deep earnestness and sobriety with which sensible and patriotic men are preparing for the performance of their duty, as electors, at the present crisis.

* An Address delivered at a Convention of the Whigs of Essex County, Massachusetts, held at Andover, on the 9th of November, 1843.

Gentlemen, the Andover Committee have desired me to address this assembly on a number of vastly important topics. It is quite impossible that I should enter far into so broad a field; I shall confine myself, in the remarks I have to make, to some of the subjects suggested by them.

They desire that I should express my sentiments upon the respective duties of the national and State governments; upon the duties of the general government to farmers, merchants, and manufacturers; upon the importance, the necessity, of a sacred observance of public faith; upon the currency and its relations, and the utility and importance of a universal medium of payment.

In reference to the discussion of these topics, I am embarrassed by the fact, that I have little new to say of any of them. By the favor of the people, I have been a good deal in public life, and upon these subjects my opinions are well known. They are unchanged. And I avail myself of this occasion, not so much to announce any new doctrines held by me, as to refer to sentiments long entertained, and often expressed.

The general government, all agree, is vested with certain powers, and held to certain duties. It is its duty to defend the country from foreign invasion, to provide armies and equip navies; the treaty-making power is confided to it; the superintendence of the foreign relations, and the maintenance of the country's honor in foreign States, belong to it. This all acknowledge. But upon its domestic duties there has grown up a difference of opinion of great breadth, leading to diverse conclusions on the one side and the other.

Upon these duties it is my intention briefly to say something, and it is my wish that all remarks made upon the subject may be taken in that spirit of conciliation and candor from which they proceed. I wish to persuade others of their correctness. I know we have a common destiny; that the good of the whole country embraces the good of all its parts; and I desire that at all times, by free and candid discussion and consideration, the differences of opinion which men entertain on these topics may be reconciled, and that all may approach, and finally stand upon, the same ground.

A contest has agitated the country for years upon the true extent of the powers of Congress in two particulars; —

1. As to its authority over the currency;

2. As to its power to encourage domestic industry by discrimination in laying duties on articles of manufacture imported from abroad.

And first, as to the currency. All agree that Congress possesses the power to regulate commerce, for that provision is found in the Constitution in terms; and that it has the power to coin money, for those words are also found in the Constitution. But there is a wide difference of opinion as to what duties are or are not fairly inferable from these grants of power. In regard to this matter, which has so long divided the country, and which will continue to agitate it till it shall be effectually settled, I must begin by a reference to some general principles and leading facts.

Congress possesses the commercial power, that is, the power of regulating commerce, and the power of coining money; and it may issue its own bills of credit. No State can either coin money, regulate commerce, or emit its own bills of credit. But, right or wrong, banking corporations are established under State authority, and issue bills; and these bills form, in fact, the mass of the circulating medium of the country. And now, since the use of these bills has become almost, if not wholly, universal, the question arises, On what government devolves the power of regulating the paper currency? Now, Gentlemen, in my opinion, which I have entertained for many years, the general government is bound to take care of the currency of the country; I think that it has a duty beyond merely coining money and fixing its value; that the power to regulate commerce gives Congress authority over that great instrument and means of commerce, the actual circulating medium of the country; and that if paper is to take the place of coin, Congress is bound to see that it is safe paper, and such as is not likely to defraud and oppress the people, to become base in character, or run to excess. On these topics my opinions have been frequently expressed, and are well known.*

As I have observed already, Gentlemen, I have very little

* In the original pamphlet edition of this speech, large extracts were here made from speeches in the Senate of the 28th of September, 1837, and the 12th of March, 1838, which will be found in a subsequent volume of this collection; and from the speech in Faneuil Hall, of the 24th of July, 1838, in Volume II. p. 267.

that is new to say on these points. The ground I have ever taken, and to which I adhere to this day, is, that if Congress is bound to furnish a currency for the people, as well as for the government, then something beyond a sub-treasury, something more than a vault, or series of vaults, where the public money can be collected, and whence it can be distributed, is necessary; on the other hand, if Congress is not bound to do this, then it may resort to any scheme it may deem proper for the collection and disbursement of revenue; although, even for that purpose, it is quite idle and ridiculous, in my opinion, to talk about vaults, and safes, and bolts, and locks.

Now, Gentlemen, there are three propositions which I would gladly submit to every candid man in every part of the country; because it is my wish to establish the principles I espouse, in the minds of men, by convincing them that they are honest, just, and will tend to the benefit of community. These propositions are, —

1st. That paper, in the present state and condition of society, will, and must, constitute the greater part of the currency, — the mass of the circulation.

All the humbug about a specie currency, a hard-money system, is altogether unworthy of a man of sense. We know that we *must*, from some source or other, have paper for circulation, and for the greater part of the circulation. Is there a man here, is there a man anywhere, who will say without a blush, that he expects an exclusive specie currency? Can any sensible man so say, without feeling his cheek burn with shame? There is none such. Well, then, is there any one not satisfied, —

2d. That a part, at least, of this paper currency, should be in every part of the country of equal value, and that value equivalent to specie?

Is it not highly desirable that we should have a circulating medium of universal receivability, if I may use such a word? The inhabitants of Maine, Georgia, the valley of the Mississippi, — is it not to be wished that they all may have some paper which every body will take? All candid men must admit that it is. It is an object of high importance that the people of Illinois, Indiana, Alabama, should have something which they can remit, without loss, to pay the manufacturers of Essex for their goods; it is as great an object to the Essex manufacturers that

they should. Well, if this be admitted, there is only one more proposition, and that is, —

3d. That no State institution, nothing but the authority of the United States, can furnish such a universal circulating medium.

Can any State institution furnish such a currency? Have we seen any instance of it whatever? We all know the contrary. We have, in Massachusetts, bills of State banks which are good and current throughout Massachusetts. They have the same in Virginia. But if any of you were to go to-morrow to Richmond, or Petersburg, you would not find your Massachusetts money current there, although, indeed, you might find brokers who would give you a premium on the bills, for the purpose of Northern remittances; still, your Massachusetts bills would not be generally received.

The citizens of each State know the condition of their own institutions; and they trust them as far as they ought. But they do not know, and ought not to be expected to know, the condition and credit of all the institutions of all the States. On the other hand, they do know the general laws and the general institutions of the general government, and the credit to which those institutions are entitled. We must then revert to the government which has the control of commerce and the control of the currency, whose "spread eagle" is good everywhere. And it is but a reasonable and just demand, to require such a government to give us a currency which shall be welcome everywhere, and trusted everywhere.

Now, where is this power? I answer, In the authority of Congress to regulate commerce, and the great agent of commerce, money. Congress has the power of commercial regulation by the Constitution; it has also the power to coin; and according to Mr. Madison's matured judgment, the power to coin implies the power to say what shall take the place of the coinage, if that coinage be displaced by paper. I will not go over the whole range of the constitutional argument. Suffice it to say, that those who made the Constitution did not doubt this power. General Washington did not doubt it, for he established an institution for this very purpose; or at least, it was established under his immediate authority and sanction. Mr. Madison did not doubt it, and I mention his name because his

authority is much relied on, as not generally favoring liberal constructions of constitutional powers. If not convinced in his own private judgment, he said, as any reasonable man would say, that the Constitution had thus been long interpreted, that its meaning was fixed and must not be disturbed. That was right. We have had a bank for forty years; some say now it is unconstitutional. Will they say so forty years hence? Will they then think that what was thought right by our fathers and grandfathers, who formed the Constitution and established the government, was wholly wrong? I suspect not. We must take the meaning of the Constitution as it has been solemnly fixed, — fixed by practice, fixed by successive acts of Congress, fixed by solemn judicial decision, — or we never shall have any settled meaning at all. It is absurd to say, that no precedent, no practice, no judicial decision, no assent of successive legislators, nor all these together, can fix the meaning of an article in the fundamental law.

I am well aware, Gentlemen, that at the present moment, and in the commercial States, the evils of a disordered currency are partially remedied, and not so severely felt. But in some parts of the country they are as great as ever. In the South and West, there is no money which deserves the name. The people trade almost wholly by barter. What they do call money is entirely without a fixed or general value; and the great depreciation and fluctuation in the currency is the cause of much demoralization in the community, and a fruitful source of other evils. Of all bad systems this is the worst. And though we in this part of the country, just now, feel no particular harm from this source, yet the evil day will come.

There are certain laws of trade which will always operate, so long as man is man, and which cannot be violated with impunity; and just as surely as this is the case, just so sure shall we again feel the effects of a disordered currency. There is now, in the mercantile phrase, a better feeling in the community, at least in the Atlantic States. There is an appearance of returning prosperity and a revival of business; but there are a thousand banks in the country, ready to lend money to good customers, under the doctrine, to which I cannot wholly agree, that all safe business paper may be discounted without danger. A plenty of money will raise prices, prosperity will beget excess,

and excess must result in revulsion. And these alternations will be our lot and our history so long as we have no general regulator of the currency.

Now, I will not say, I never have said, that a Bank of the United States is absolutely necessary; but I have said that it has been tried for forty years with success, and is therefore entitled to respectful consideration. Some eight years ago, in the Senate of the United States, I said that a national bank had done much good to the country, yet it was not worth my while to propose its reëstablishment while there was no general call of the people for such a measure. I remain of that opinion. I have said, more recently, that a national bank whose capital should be derived from private subscriptions, and with the power of private discounts, is out of the question. I think so still, though it may be I am mistaken. My reason is, that State institutions for these purposes have become so much multiplied, and that many States derive large portions of their revenue from taxes upon the capital of such banks. Nevertheless, I am quite willing to agree that a Bank of the United States, upon the old model, is perfectly constitutional; and if, in the opinion of a future Congress and in the judgment of the country, such an institution should be deemed expedient, it shall have my hearty support. But my opinion is, that the country much more needs some institution under national authority, with power to restrain in some just mode the amount of paper issues, than it needs a bank which may itself make large discounts to individuals.

I have thus spoken upon commerce and the currency. These lead directly to the tariff, or the policy of encouraging domestic industry by laying discriminating duties on foreign importations.

I wish to state my opinions on this topic with some degree of precision, because I believe there is a sort of ultraism prevailing with regard to it, characteristic of the age. People run into extremes, not only in politics, but in all other matters They are either on the Ganges, or at the extremity of the West. There are men who would carry a tariff to prohibition. Again, there are those who assert it to be perfectly unconstitutional to lay duties with the least regard to favoring or encouraging the

products of our own country. My opinion is, that the power of favoring or encouraging productions of our own, by just discriminations in imposing duties for revenue on imports, does belong to Congress, and ought to be exercised in all proper cases.

This, Gentlemen, is my opinion, and I should be perfectly willing to discuss the matter with any candid man in the Commonwealth.

There are two propositions to which I invite your attention; —

1st. Congress has the power to lay duties of impost. No State has this power. This is a most important consideration.

2d. Before the adoption of the Constitution, and while the States could lay impost duties, several of them laid such duties, with discriminations avowedly intended to foster their own products. They now can do no such thing. It must accordingly be done by Congress, or not at all.

Now the power of Congress is to regulate commerce. And in all English history, and all our own history, down to the Revolution, and to the time of the adoption of the Constitution, importation of some articles was encouraged, and of others discouraged or prohibited, by *regulations of trade*. The regulation of trade, therefore, was a term of well-known meaning, and did comprehend the duty or object of discriminating, with a view to favor home productions. We find this to have been so in England, from the time of her Tudors and Stuarts down; and in America, the opinion I have stated was held by Otis, Adams, and the other great and eminent men of the Revolution. But upon this point I need not dwell, for the whole doctrine has been placed upon immutable foundations by a son of your own county, a most distinguished member of the Senate of the United States (Hon. Rufus Choate), in his speech of March, 1842.

The amount of the whole matter is this. History instructs us, that, before the Constitution was formed, the States laid duties of imposts; but each only for itself, and therefore the duties were very different and unequal; and the States which laid duties for the protection of their own manufactures were immediately exposed to competition from others that had no manufactures, who would open their ports freely to the goods taxed by their neighbors. We see at once how vain it would be for one State to look only to her own interests, while all the others

were looking only to theirs. Take a supposed instance, for example, in the case of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Massachusetts had manufactures, Rhode Island had not. Massachusetts laid duties on imported goods, Rhode Island did not. The consequence would be, that the goods taxed by Massachusetts in her seaport towns would be brought free into Newport or Providence, and it would only be by a cordon of custom-houses throughout the whole extent of her border, that Massachusetts could prevent the introduction of those goods into her territories.

The case is suppositious, but I speak to Massachusetts men who understand the effect of such a system, whose fathers experienced it, and I tell them that this obvious effect produced in Massachusetts, as much as any thing, the disposition to come under a general government, and to ratify the Constitution. It was, in fact, the full belief of the people, that this power of laying discriminating duties was granted to Congress, as part of the revenue power, and that it would be exercised. They had a right to expect, and did expect, that it would be used beneficially for their interests.

The whole history of the country from 1783 to 1788 proves this. That history is as important as that of any period of our national existence. We see in it the then infant States struggling under a load of debt incurred in the sacred cause of the Revolution, struggling under the extinction of commerce and prostration of manufactures, and struggling all in vain. These things produced that strong disposition which prevailed from 1784 to 1788, to establish a uniform system of commercial regulations, and extend also all proper encouragement to manufactures.

Gentlemen, a native of Massachusetts, certainly inferior to none in sagacity, and whose name confers honor upon the whole country, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, in 1787, indicated his sentiments upon these points in a very remarkable manner. The convention to deliberate upon the formation of the Constitution was held in Philadelphia, in May, 1787. Dr. Franklin was, if I remember aright, the President, as the office was then called, of Pennsylvania, and was chosen also as a member of the convention. As the delegates were assembling, he invited them to a meeting at his house, on which occasion a paper

on this subject was read, which was subsequently printed, and to extracts from which I would call your attention.* They will show you what were the sentiments of Dr. Franklin. They prove that far-sighted sagacity, which could discern what was then visible to so few eyes; and that wisdom, which pointed out a course so greatly beneficial.

Let me now revert to the opinions of Massachusetts in this respect; to this good old Bay State, whose citizens we are proud to be, and whose early espousal of the cause of a national government is so well known. I will observe, first, that at the time these opinions were sanctioned by Dr. Franklin, and, indeed, till a very recent period, the manufacturers of the country were shop-workmen; tailors, hatters, smiths, shoemakers, and others, who wrought in their own shops; but still the principle is the same as if they were banded into corporations. He who denies to Congress the power to protect manufactures, as now carried on, denies protection as much to every individual workman as to Andover or Lowell. Let all classes of artisans, in the cities and villages, think well of this.

Now, Gentlemen, it so happened, that, in the years of severe disaster between the peace and the formation of the Constitution, the merchants and mechanics of Boston had their attention called to the subject, and their proceedings, only a little earlier than the paper just referred to, sprang from the same sense of necessity. I will trouble you to listen to some of them, which I gather from the publications of that day.

At a numerous and respectable meeting of "the merchants, traders, and others, convened at Faneuil Hall," on Saturday, the 16th of April, 1785, the following, among other resolutions, were adopted:—

"Whereas no commercial treaty is at present established between these United States and Great Britain, and whereas certain British merchants, factors, and agents from England are now residing in this town, who have received large quantities of English goods, and are in expectation of receiving further supplies, imported in British bottoms, or otherwise, greatly to the hinderance of freight in all American vessels; and as many more such persons are daily expected to arrive among us, which threatens an entire monopoly of all British importations in the hands of such

* See Appendix, No. I.

merchants, agents, or factors, which we apprehend will operate to the prejudice of the interest of this country; therefore, to prevent as far as possible the evil tendency of such persons continuing among us (excepting those of them who shall be approved by the selectmen), and to discourage the sale of their merchandise, we, the merchants, traders, and others of the town of Boston, do agree,—

"First, That a committee be appointed to draft a petition to Congress representing the embarrassments under which the trade now labors, and the still greater to which it is exposed; and that the said committee be empowered and directed to write to the several seaports in this State, requesting them to join with the merchants in this town in simi ar applications to Congress, immediately to regulate the trade of the United States agreeably to the powers vested in them by the government of this Commonwealth; and also to obtain instructions to their representatives at the next General Court, to call the attention of their delegates in Congress to the importance of bringing forward such regulations as shall place our commerce on a footing of equality.

"Voted, That the said committee be requested to write to the merchants in the several seaports of the other United States, earnestly recommending to them an immediate application to the legislatures of their respective States to vest such powers in Congress (if not already done) as shall be competent to the interesting purposes aforesaid, and also to petition Congress to make such regulations as shall have the desired effect.

"Voted, That we do pledge our honor that we will not directly or indirectly purchase any goods of, or have any commercial connections whatever with, such British merchants, factors, or agents as are now residing among us, or may hereafter arrive, either from England or any part of the British dominions (excepting such persons as shall be approved as aforesaid), and we will do all in our power to prevent all persons acting under us from having any commercial intercourse with them, until the salutary purposes of these resolutions shall have been accomplished."

So far the merchants. Now what said the mechanics, the artisans, the shop-workmen, to this? At an adjourned meeting of persons belonging to those classes at the Green Dragon Tavern, on Monday, the 25th of April, 1785, the following resolutions, among others, were passed:—

"Voted, that a committee be appointed by this body to draft a petition to the next General Court, setting forth the difficulties the manufacturers of this town labor under by the importation of certain articles (to be

enumerated in the petition), and praying a prohibition, or that such duties may be laid as will effectually protect the manufacture of the same.

"Voted, That we do bear our public testimony against sending away our circulating cash for foreign remittances, as this practice, we conceive, is calculated to impoverish the country, to distress individuals in the prosecution of their business and in the payment of their taxes.

"Voted, That a committee be appointed to write to the committee of merchants and traders of this town, inclosing them a copy of these votes, and desiring a mutual correspondence on the subject."

The committee appointed under the foregoing resolution addressed the following letter to "the Committee of Merchants, Traders, and others":—

"*Boston, April* 26, 1785.

"GENTLEMEN,—We, being appointed by the tradesmen and manufacturers of this town to inform you what measures they have adopted at this important crisis of our affairs, beg leave to inclose a copy of their proceedings, which they hope will meet with your approbation.

"We shall, by all measures in our power, endeavor to cultivate that harmony so essentially necessary at this time, and recollect with pleasing satisfaction the union that has always subsisted between the merchants, tradesmen, and manufacturers of this town; we should regret if any measures should be now adopted by either, to impair that affection which it has ever been our happiness to boast.

"But as the several branches of our occupations have of late been materially affected by European importations, we conceive ourselves in duty bound to prevent, if possible, those supplies either by foreigners or our own merchants.

"We have therefore voted a petition to be presented to the next General Court for this purpose, and as we doubt not the sincerity of your declaration 'to encourage the manufactures of this country,' we trust you will support with your whole influence any measures calculated to promote so desirable an object.

"We are, Gentlemen, with every sentiment of esteem,

"Your obedient and humble servants,

JOHN GRAY,
BENJAMIN AUSTIN, JR.,
SAMUEL G. JARVIS,
JOHN SKINNER
SARSON BELCHER.

"To the Committee of Merchants, Traders, and others."

Well, how did the merchants receive this? I will show you. Here is a letter, signed in their behalf, by that great patriot, and prince of merchants, John Hancock. Here was a full coöperation between merchants and manufacturers, for the united support of their own interests.

"*Boston, May* 2, 1785.

"GENTLEMEN, — Your communications of the 26th ult. were interesting and agreeable. Our situation is truly critical. To the United States in Congress we look for effectual relief, and to them we have accordingly appealed.

"We rejoice to find our sentiments and views harmonizing with yours, and hope that our united exertions will be crowned with the desired success.

"We shall cheerfully use what influence we have in promoting and encouraging the manufactures of our country, and for obtaining at the next General Court such restrictions and excises as may have so happy a tendency.

"We derive great support from that unanimity which appears to actuate our respective proceedings, and while that subsists we can no more despair of the commerce, trade, and manufactures, than of the liberties of America.

"We are, Gentlemen, with much esteem,

"Your most humble servants,

"JOHN HANCOCK,

In the name and in behalf of the Committee of Merchants, Tradesmen, and others.

To JOHN GRAY, ESQ., Chairman of the Committee of Tradesmen, Manufacturers, &c."

But the mechanics did not limit their addresses to the merchants of Boston. They addressed a spirited and sensible letter to all the tradesmen and manufacturers of Massachusetts, in which the same topics are urged with force and earnestness.*

Now, what is all this? and what does it prove? Why, though at peace with England, our ships could not visit her ports, or, in fact, those of any European nation. We had no national flag; we were unknown upon the seas; consequently, British vessels enjoyed the monopoly of our trade. So great, indeed, was the depression among all classes, that some gentlemen, who had a little property left from the Revolu-

* See Appendix, No. II.

tion, made a contribution to build three or four ships, on the Mystic River, so as to give some employment to working shipbuilders. But, having no national character, and no means of sustaining commerce, these ships rotted on the ways, or at the wharves. The merchants of Boston thought that voluntary agreements were the only means in their power, and the agreement quoted above was one result of their opinions.

Now, Gentlemen, you have seen what happened in this state of things. The merchants having thus resolved not to use goods imported in foreign bottoms, in order to protect their own interests, the manufacturing classes assembled, and, in view of protecting *their* interests, they resolved not to use imported goods at all. They appealed to the merchants, as you have seen, and the appeal was answered with expressions of sympathy and support. The artisans, with Paul Revere and John Gray at their head, next addressed themselves to the mechanics in various parts of the State, setting forth the fatal consequences to their interests, not only of importations in British vessels, but of importations of foreign goods, free of tax, in any vessels whatever. They petitioned Governor Bowdoin and the Legislature for relief, by the establishment of imposts. But, as I have before asked, what could a single State do?

This state of things continued till 1788, when the Massachusetts Convention to consider the Constitution was held in Boston. Some of the most eminent persons who have shed lustre on the State were members of that Convention, and many of them, as is well known, felt great doubts about adopting the Constitution. Among these were two individuals, none other than John Hancock and Samuel Adams, the proscribed patriots. But the energy, determination, perseverance, and earnestness of the mechanics and tradesmen of Boston influenced even these wise and great men, and tended to, and did, in an eminent degree, contribute to the ratification of the Constitution. Any man will see this, who will look into the public transactions of that day.

There was a particular set of resolutions, founded on this very idea of favoring home productions, full of energy and decision passed by the mechanics of Boston. And where did the mechanics of Boston meet to pass them? Full of the influence of these feelings, they congregated at the head-quarters of the

Revolution. I see, waving among the banners before me, that of the old Green Dragon. It was there, in Union Street, that John Gray, Paul Revere, and others of their class, met for consultation. There, with earnestness and enthusiasm, they passed their resolutions. A committee carried them to the Boston delegation in the Convention. Mr. Samuel Adams asked Colonel Revere, how many mechanics were at the meeting; and Colonel Revere answered, "More than there are stars in heaven."

The resolutions had their effect. The Constitution was established, and a universal burst of joy from all classes, merchants, manufacturers, and mechanics, proclaimed the exultation of the people at the thrice happy event. The journals of the day tell us, that

"On the ratification being declared, a very large concourse of spectators testified their satisfaction by repeated huzzas, and the whole Convention, having been previously invited, partook with a number of respectable citizens of a decent repast prepared in the Senate Chamber where, in mutual congratulations and testimonials of satisfaction, all party ideas were done away, and such a spirit of joy, union, and urbanity diffused, as, if continued, must be attended with the most happy consequences through the Commonwealth. The toasts given were truly conciliatory, and were, we believe, drunk with sincerity by every one present. All appeared willing to bury the hatchet of animosity, and to smoke the calumet of union and love.

"After this repast, the Convention dissolved."

Thus far the proceedings of the Convention. Now for those of the people.

"The Committee of Tradesmen met, and, by public advertisement, requested the attendance of the mechanics and artisans of every description in town at Faneuil Hall, in order to form and proceed in grand procession therefrom, to testify their approbation of the ratification of the Federal Constitution by the Convention."

This "grand procession" took place; and the artisans, mechanics, and manufacturers of Boston, together with the merchants and all other classes, indulged in the hope, not more sanguine than the event warranted, that, under the operation of the new national Constitution, prosperity would return, business revive, cheerfulness and contentment overspread the land, and

the country go rapidly forward in its career of growth and success.

But, Gentlemen, this sentiment and feeling were not merely the sentiment and feeling of Massachusetts. We may look at the debates in all the State conventions, and the expositions of all the greatest men in the country, particularly in Massachusetts and Virginia, the great Northern and Southern stars, and we shall find it everywhere held up as the main reason for the adoption of the Constitution, that it would give the general government the power to regulate commerce and trade. This power was thus considered established by the framers of the Constitution, and has been steadily recognized by the government. It was distinctly and in terms recognized by the very first act laying duties of imposts; and notwithstanding doubts and denial of it in excited times, it yet pervades the whole history of our legislation. The power, therefore, being clear, and its application in times past certain, the remaining question respects its utility and expediency.

Here, again, let me say, that I wish no exercise of the power, without much consideration and moderation. The shipping interest, the mercantile interest, as well as the mechanic interest, are concerned; and both and all must be looked after and cared for. I wish, in fixing all laws on this subject, that nothing excessive may be introduced; that no traps shall be laid; that nothing unexpected shall spring up in the way of the mercantile, or any other interest; and that nothing shall be enacted which will be expedient for the whole country.

And here let me remark upon the extreme injustice of attacking the tariff on the ground that it favors the rich corporations of New England. We know that this opinion has no real foundation. We know that corporations are only partnerships, carried on in a more convenient manner than they could be by indenture; that they are no monopolies; and that it is because of their convenience only that they are employed.

Gentlemen, I believe that a tariff of moderate duties, carefully laid, is expedient for the whole country; —

1st. Because it augments the aggregate of national wealth, by stimulating labor.

Moderate imposts upon such articles as we can and do manufacture must inevitably furnish a stimulus to our labor, and it

is now the general, nearly the universal opinion, that labor is the source of wealth. Capital is a stimulus to labor. Now to me it appears very plain, that the stimulus can be applied here with greater effect than at a distance, and that, consequently, the country will be benefited accordingly. On this point, I am aware of the authority of McCulloch and Mr. Senior, writers of the very highest repute, both of whom I have the honor to know, and whom I greatly esteem.

Mr. McCulloch is a gentleman who has contributed more than any man of our age to a correct knowledge of statistics and political economy. But, if I may venture to say so, I think some of his opinions a little too abstract, or at least not applicable here. Our condition, I think, is peculiar; we have no such broad distinction between capital and labor as prevails in England. There is, indeed, no subject which so much requires an essay to set forth all its prominence, importance, and peculiarity, as American labor; there is nothing like it on the globe; and there never was any thing like it.

Our labor reaches beyond mere subsistence. In Europe the case is different. We know that, with us, labor earns for itself and creates a capital; and, looking at our country, we see that for this reason her condition is, and will be, most fortunate and happy for a century to come.

Gentlemen, the labor of the United States is respectable. We are emphatically a country of labor; and labor with us is not reluctant drudgery. It is cheerful, contented, spirited, because it is respectable, and because it is certain of its reward. Labor everywhere mixes itself with capital. The fields around us, how many of them are tilled by their owners! The shops in our towns, how many are occupied by their proprietors, for the convenient pursuit of their callings! Hence, in the United States, we see labor and capital mixed together in a degree unequalled in the world. What is the value of a hundred acres of land at the foot of the Rocky Mountains or in the remote regions of Spanish South America? Nothing at all. There is no value to any land till man has mixed his labor with it. But the moment an American laborer drives his plough through these acres, or fells a tree upon them, that moment he creates a capital, which every step he takes, and every stroke he gives, constantly augments. He thus not only lives by labor, but

every day's work, while it gives him subsistence, adds to his means, his property, his capital. Where else in this world shall we find the same state of things to such a degree?

I have ventured to express a doubt whether all the opinions of McCulloch are applicable to us; but I acknowledge with pleasure, that on the subject of the importance of high wages he has expressed himself in the justest and soundest terms. He has laid down maxims on this subject which lie at the foundation of national prosperity in its highest state. This is what he says:—

"The best interests of society require that the rate of wages should be elevated as high as possible; that a taste for the comforts, luxuries, and enjoyments of human life should be widely diffused, and, if possible, interwoven with the national habits and prejudices. A low rate of wages, by rendering it impossible for increased exertions to obtain any considerable increase of comforts and enjoyment, effectually hinders any such exertion from ever being made, and is, of all others, the most powerful cause of that idleness and apathy that contents itself with what can barely continue animal existence. The experience of all ages and nations proves that high wages are at once the keenest spur, the most powerful stimulus to unremitting and assiduous exertion, and the best means of attaching the people to the institutions under which they live."

On this subject, Gentlemen, I refer with approbation and pleasure to a very able speech in Congress, ten years ago, by Mr. Nathan Appleton, which I heartily commend to the perusal of every one who desires to see the principles of political economy applicable to our condition fairly set forth.

It is our good fortune, Gentlemen, to live in a country distinguished, as the whole world says, by a high rate of wages. We are here this day, in the midst of a county agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial. This very township and its institutions show the happy results of this condition of things. It is a beautiful township; few are more so. In an agricultural point of view it is very fertile. There are streams in it which afford facilities, improved to the fullest extent of their capacity, to turn mills and drive machinery. And what rate of wages do we see existing here? We find that female operatives, after paying their board, receive two dollars, or nine shillings sterling, per week. Is there any thing like this in the manufacturing dis-

tricts of England, France, Germany, or Prussia? Nothing. The male workmen, after paying their board, in like manner, clear twelve dollars a month. We cannot see this in any other country. There is also a degree of personal elevation of character, of respectability, of education, among our laboring classes, which is to be found nowhere else. To instance, again, in Andover; here is a township of about nine miles square, occupied by an intelligent, well-fed, well-clothed, well-housed population; there are ten or twelve neat and commodious places of worship; twenty of those gems of New England, free schools, where the sons of the rich and the poor meet on an equal footing, and receive the same useful instruction. Here, too, is a classical seminary, which has long been distinguished for its ripe and elegant scholars; and, of more recent establishment, a theological institution, the piety, talents, and learning of whose professors have made it most honorably known, not only in the United States, but in Europe.

Why should we wish to change this happy condition, by any speculation, or experiment, which will not be likely to improve, and may destroy it?

I confess that many persons in the Commonwealth, and perhaps in the crowd around me, entertain opinions directly the reverse of those which, in their operation and practical effect, have produced, as I think, these results and this state of things. I attribute them to misapprehensions, and am therefore desirous that our opponents, for I will not call them enemies or adversaries, may hear us with a spirit of candor, so that we may see if our opinions and actions cannot be made to coincide.

Gentlemen, I believe, —

2d. That the tariff favors every interest of the country. The sugar-planters of Louisiana, we know, it encourages. The cotton-growers of the South, I firmly believe, it helps, because I deem the maintenance of a steady market here of very essential benefit to them. I believe, moreover, that it is favorable to the agricultural interest; but upon this I need not enlarge, as I have recently, in another place, taken occasion to speak upon this point.

There is one essential difference between the United States and England, with respect to agriculture. There the produce of the soil does not feed the population; consumers, therefore,

demand a free importation of foreign produce. With us it is exactly the reverse. Our agriculture is productive far beyond our consumption, and the great objects of our producers are an augmented demand at home, and as much increase as possible in the demand from abroad. We are sellers, the English are buyers, of agricultural produce, and this makes all the difference in the world in the reasoning upon the case.

Gentlemen, the manufacturing interest is not a local interest, and so much progress has elsewhere been made in certain manufactures, that I cannot but think a more just feeling, as to this point, must follow. There is hardly a State at the South, that has not, at this moment, cotton manufactories; and in New York there are now for sale considerable quantities of Southern goods. I have been furnished by a friend with statements on this subject of the most instructive character.*

I say, therefore, to all our brethren, that the manufacturing is not an exclusive, but a general interest, and is to be properly sustained, not by persuading the North to vote down the South, for fear the South should destroy our interests, but by patriotism, moderation, and mutual conciliation and regard.

A tariff does not necessarily increase prices. One year after the present tariff was established, many articles embraced in its provisions were considerably lower than they had before been.† And I ask any one if there is now any complaint of undue high prices in any article to which the present tariff extends.

The Andover Committee, Gentlemen, have mentioned the public lands. Upon this topic I have but very little now to say. Congress has affirmed the proposition, that, in the present condition of the country, the proceeds of the public lands belong rightfully to the States. If it be so, then I say that *this* is the time to make the appropriation of the lands, because now is the time when the States need all their means.

In my opinion, though I reproach nobody, for I myself voted for the bill, our legislation upon this subject has been inconsistent in this; that when the land-bill was passed, provision was made that the appropriation should be void in case of war, and

* See Appendix, No. III. † See Appendix, No. IV.

at any rate limited to five years. I think this inconsistent, and a sort of contradiction; because, if the lands rightfully belong to the States, they belong to them as well in war as in peace, and for ever, as well as for a time limited. And if we do any thing in regard to the public lands, by way of ceding their income to the States, the good of the country requires that it should be done once for all. The good of the country requires that this question should be removed from the political arena, and disposed of permanently.

Connected somewhat with this topic is the present condition of the public credit. We live in a State, the credit of which is good, is unimpaired. But there are States in the Union whose credit is gone, and I believe that their people, and all the people, should make every effort to restore that credit, at whatever sacrifice of personal convenience or comfort. There is danger of remissness in this respect, danger of want of effort and want of resolution. But we should all remember that we all suffer. The country as a whole country, and every individual as a part of the country, suffer daily from the existing state of things respecting those State debts. We are all of the same American family. None of us can shake off that character, or, when abroad, disavow the relationship. Our States are much more than independent individuals or corporations; they are sovereign, but connected communities. Their faith is public faith; their failure is the failure of public faith. And each and every one of us suffers from it. Nothing in a State can be trustworthy, if the State itself be not.

I hold in my hand an address from the Congress of the Confederation to the people, in 1783, one of the darkest periods in our history. It shows you what principles, what honesty, what determination to preserve the public faith untarnished, pervaded the bosoms of the great men of those days. I commend it to your reflections.*

This declaration of Congress is in favor of paying the debts of the States, and of every one of the States. A similar crisis has arisen now, and our country is again put to the severest test of republican virtue. I may say that the question which now

* See Appendix, No. V.

rings throughout Europe is this: "Will the republican governments of America maintain their faith?" If they will not, they must be abandoned. The society of the world cannot exist without faith among nations, any more than society at home can exist without faith and trust among individuals.

But I say this faith and credit will be redeemed. At any sacrifice it must be. The tarnish shall be wiped off from the non-paying States, the credit of the country restored. And now is the time to apply the public lands to this end. The doctrine of repudiation is at present avowed by nobody. Nobody will stand up, and give the State to which he belongs open advice to adopt that measure. Times are growing better; there are omens of returning prosperity; and I am sure that true and good men, in every State, will exert themselves for the entire reëstablishment of character and credit.

Gentlemen, having detained you so long, I beg to say a little, and it shall be very little, of a personal nature.

I am not a candidate for any office in the gift of the government, or in the gift of the people. I have not been named for any office at my own suggestion, or, indeed, recently, with my own previous knowledge. I am a private citizen; and that condition will never be changed by any movement or effort made for that purpose by myself, or at my suggestion. In my opinion, nominations for the high offices of the country should come, if they come at all, from the free and spontaneous exercise of that respect and confidence which the people themselves may feel. All solicitations of such nominations, and all canvassing for such high trusts, I regard as equally inconsistent with personal dignity, and derogatory to the character of the institutions of the country.

As a private man, I hold my opinions on public subjects. They are all such, in their great features and general character, as I have ever held. It is as impossible that I should tread back the path of my political opinions, as that I should retrace, step by step, the progress of my natural life, until I should find myself again a youth. On the leading questions arising under our constitutions and forms of government; on the importance of maintaining the separation of powers, which those constitutions establish; on the great principles of such a policy

as shall promote all interests, maintain general harmony in the country, and perpetuate the blessings of political and religious liberty, — my opinions, the result of no little study, and some experience, have become part of myself. They are identified with all my habits of thought and reflection; and though I may change my views of particular measures, or not deem the same measures equally proper at all times, yet I am sure it is quite impossible I should ever take such a view, either of the public interest or of my own duty, as should lead to a departure from any cardinal principles.

As a private man, I am ready to do all in my power to uphold principles which I have ever deemed important, and to support measures which the public interest, in my judgment, requires. And as measures cannot be accomplished without the agency of men, I am of course entirely willing to support the men of the highest character, most unexceptionable principles, and who may be most able to take an efficient and successful lead in such measures. And here, perhaps, I ought to pause. But the gentlemen who invited me to this meeting were pleased to express their approbation of my conduct in remaining in the Cabinet at Washington after the other members, originally appointed by General Harrison, had withdrawn. I should not have alluded to this subject, Gentlemen, on this occasion, but for the reference which the committee have made to it. I am aware that there are many persons in the country, having feelings not unfriendly toward me, personally, and entertaining all proper respect for my public character, who yet think I ought to have left the Cabinet with my colleagues. I do not complain of any fair exercise of opinion in this respect; and if, by such persons as I have referred to, explanation be desired of any thing in the past, or any thing in my present opinions, it will be readily and cheerfully given. On the other hand, those who deal only in coarse vituperation, and satisfy their sense of candor and justice simply by the repetition of the charge of dereliction of duty, and infidelity to Whig principles, are not entitled to the respect of an answer from me. The burning propensity to censure and reproach by which such persons seem to be actuated would probably be somewhat rebuked, if they knew by whose advice, and with whose approbation, I resolved on staying in the Cabinet.

Gentlemen, I could not but be sensible that great responsibility attached to the course which I adopted. It was a moment of great excitement. A most unfortunate difference had broken out between the President and the Whig members of Congress. Much exasperation had been produced, and the whole country was in a very inflamed state. No man of sense can suppose, that, without strong motives, I should wish to differ in conduct from those with whom I had long acted; and as for those persons whose charity leads them to seek for such motive in the hope of personal advantage, neither their candor nor their sagacity deserves any thing but contempt. I admit, Gentlemen, that if a very strong desire to be instrumental and useful in accomplishing a settlement of our difficulties with England, which had then risen to an alarming height, and appeared to be approaching a crisis, — if this be a personal motive, then I confess myself to have been influenced by a personal motive. The imputation of any other personal motive, the charge of seeking any selfish advantage, I repel with utter scorn.

To be sure it excites contempt, but hardly any thing so respectful as regret or indignation, when persons capable of no effort in any cause but that of making a noise, and with no other merit than that of interested partisanship, — men, indeed, yet reeking from their labors in the support of the most questionable measures of General Jackson's administration, and others still odorous with the perfumes of the sub-treasury, — distend their throats, and admonish the country to beware of Mr. Webster's infidelity to Whig principles.

Gentlemen, I thought I saw an opportunity of doing the state some service, and I ran the risk of the undertaking. I certainly do not regret it, and never shall regret it. And it is in no spirit of boasting or vainglory, it is from no undue feeling of self-respect, that I say now, that I am ready to leave it to the public judgment to decide whether my remaining in the Cabinet was best for the country, or, on the other hand, whether my leaving it would have been better for the country.

On this question I am in the judgment of this generation and the next generation; and am willing that my name and fame and character shall abide the result.

There was no difference between the President and myself on the great questions of our foreign relations. I neither foresaw

then, nor experienced afterward, any embarrassment from such a cause as that. And it is but an act of justice, which I always perform with pleasure, to say, that in the English negotiation, and in other negotiations, I found the President influenced by just principles and proper sentiments, desirous of maintaining, at the same time, the honor and the peace of the country.

Gentlemen, exception has been taken to a note addressed by me to the editors of the National Intelligencer of the 13th of September, 1841, on the ground that that note implied a censure on my colleagues for leaving the President's Cabinet. But I intended no such reproach. I intended, certainly, only to speak for myself, and not to reproach others. This was the note.

"*Washington, September* 13, 1841.

"To Messrs. Gales & Seaton: —

"Gentlemen, — Lest any misapprehension should exist as to the reasons which have led me to differ from the course pursued by my late colleagues, I wish to say that I remain in my place, first, because I have seen no sufficient reasons for the dissolution of the late Cabinet by the voluntary act of its own members.

"I am perfectly persuaded of the absolute necessity of an institution, under the authority of Congress, to aid revenue and financial operations, and to give the country the blessings of a good currency and cheap exchanges.

"Notwithstanding what has passed, I have confidence that the President will coöperate with the legislature in overcoming all difficulties in the attainment of these objects; and it is to the union of the Whig party, by which I mean the Whig President, the Whig Congress, and the Whig people, that I look for the realization of our wishes. I can look nowhere else.

"In the second place, if I had seen reasons to resign my office, I should not have done so without giving the President reasonable notice, and affording him time to select the head to whom he should confide the delicate and important affairs now pending in this department.

"I am, Gentlemen, respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"Daniel Webster."

If in this there was any ambiguity, or any expression not well chosen, or not well considered, candor, I think, might have interpreted it by another letter, written and published about

the same time, addressed to a friend in New York, which I will read.

"*Washington, September* 11, 1841.

"My dear Sir,—I thank you for your kind and friendly letter.

"You will have learned that Messrs. Ewing, Bell, Badger, and Crittenden have resigned their respective offices. Probably Mr. Granger may feel bound to follow the example. This occurrence can hardly cause you the same degree of regret which it has occasioned to me; as they are not only friends, but persons with whom I have had, for some time, a daily official intercourse. I could not partake in this movement.

"It is supposed to be justified, I presume, by the differences which have arisen between the President and Congress, upon the means of establishing a proper fiscal agency, and restoring a sound state of the currency; and collateral matters, growing out of these differences. I regret these differences as deeply as any man; but I have not been able to see in what manner the resignation of the Cabinet was likely either to remove or mitigate the evils produced by them. On the contrary, my only reliance for a remedy for those evils has been, and is, on the union, conciliation, and perseverance of the whole Whig party, and I by no means despair of seeing yet accomplished, by these means, all that we desire. It may render us more patient under disappointment in regard to one measure, to recollect, as is justly stated by the President in his last message, how great a number of important measures have been already successfully carried through. I hardly know when such a mass of business has been despatched in a single session of Congress.

"The annual winter session is now near at hand; the same Congress is again soon to assemble; and feeling as deeply as I ever did the indispensable necessity of some suitable provision for the keeping of the public money, for aid to the operations of the treasury, and to the high public interests of currency and exchanges, I am not in haste to believe that the party which has now the predominance will not, in all these respects, yet fulfil the expectations of the country. If it shall not, then our condition is forlorn indeed. But for one, I will not give up the hope.

"My particular connection with the administration, however, is with another department. I think very humbly, none can think more humbly, of the value of the services which I am able to render to the public in that post. But as there is, so far as I know, on all subjects affecting our foreign relations, a concurrence in opinion between the President and myself; and as there is nothing to disturb the harmony of our intercourse, I have not felt it consistent with the duty which I

owe to the country, to run the risk, by any sudden or abrupt proceeding, of embarrassing the executive, in regard to subjects and questions now immediately pending, and which intimately affect the preservation of the peace of the country.

"I am, dear Sir, with constant regard, yours,

"DANIEL WEBSTER.

"H. KETCHUM, ESQ., New York."

Gentlemen, it must have been obvious to all, that my remaining in the Cabinet of the President, notwithstanding the personal good-will between us, after the separation between him and the great body of the Whigs, could only be inconvenient and unpleasant to both. My retirement, therefore, was the necessary consequence of political occurrences, and I am not, I think, called on to say more.

I hope I have not extended these remarks beyond the purpose which I proposed; and I close them by repeating the declaration made by me in another place, last year, that I am a Whig, a Massachusetts Whig, a Faneuil Hall Whig, and none shall have the power, now or hereafter, to deprive me of the position in which that character places me.

Appendix

No. I. — Page 168.

Extracts from an Essay entitled "An Inquiry into the Principles on which a Commercial System for the United States of America should be founded." *

THERE are in every country certain important crises when exertion or neglect must produce consequences of the utmost moment. The period at which the inhabitants of these States have now arrived will be admitted by every attentive and serious mind to be clearly of this description.

Our money absorbed by a wanton consumption of imported luxuries, a fluctuating paper medium substituted in its stead, foreign commerce extremely circumscribed, and a federal government not only ineffective, but disjointed, tell us indeed too plainly, that further negligence may ruin us for ever. Impressed with this view of our affairs, the writer of the following pages has ventured to intrude upon the public. But as neither his time nor opportunities will permit him to treat of all the great objects which excite his apprehensions or engage his wishes, he means principally to confine himself to that part of them which has been most subjected to his observations and inquiries.

In a country blessed with a fertile soil, and a climate admitting steady labor, where the cheapness of land tempts the European from his home, and the manufacturer from his trade, we are led by a few moments of reflection to fix on agriculture as the great leading interest. From this we shall find most of our other advantages result, so far as they arise from the nature of our affairs, and where they are not produced by the coercion of laws, the fisheries are the principal exception. In order to make a true estimate of the magnitude of agriculture, we must remember that it is encouraged by few or no duties on the importation of rival

* The paper from which these extracts are given is published in the American Museum, Vol. I. p. 432, with the name of Tench Toxe, Esq., as its author. It is also incorporated into his work called "View of the United States of America," p. 4.

produce, that it furnishes outward cargoes not only for all our own ships but those also which foreign nations send to our ports, or, in other words that it pays for all our importations; that it supplies a part of the clothing of our people and the food of them and their cattle; that what is consumed at home, including the materials for manufacturing, is four or five times the value of what is exported; that the number of people employed in agriculture is at least nine parts in ten of the inhabitants of America; that therefore the planters and farmers do form the body of the militia, the bulwark of the nation; that the value of property occupied by agriculture is manifold greater than that of the property employed in every other way; that the settlement of our waste lands, and subdividing our improved farms, is every year increasing the preëminence of the agricultural interest; that the resources we derive from it are at all times certain and indispensably necessary; and lastly, that the rural life promotes health and morality, by its active nature, and by keeping our people from the luxuries and vices of the towns. In short, agriculture appears to be the spring of our commerce and the parent of our manufactures.

The commerce of America, including our exports, imports, shipping, manufactures, and fisheries, may be properly considered as forming one interest. So uninformed or mistaken have many of us been, that it has been stated as the great object, and I fear it is yet believed to be the most important interest, of New England. But, from the best calculations I have been able to make, I cannot raise the proportion of property or the number of men employed in manufactures, fisheries, navigation, and trade to one eighth the property and the people occupied by agriculture, even in that commercial quarter of the Union.

While I feel an absolute conviction that our true interests should restrain us from burdening or impeding agriculture in any way whatever, I am not only ready to admit, but must beg leave to urge, that sound policy requires our giving every encouragement to commerce and its connections, which may be found consistent with a due regard to agriculture.

The communication between the different ports of every nation is a business entirely in their power. The policy of most countries has been to secure this domestic navigation to their own people. The extensive coasts, the immense bays and numerous rivers of the United States, have already made this an important object, and it must increase with our population. As the places at which the cargoes of coasting vessels are delivered must be supplied with American produce from some part of the Union, and as the merchant can always have American bottoms to transport the goods of the producing State to the State consuming them, no interruption to the market of the planters and farmers can be apprehended from prohibiting transportation in foreign bottoms from

port to port within the United States. A single exception may perhaps be proper, permitting foreign vessels to carry from port to port, for the purpose of finishing their sales, any goods that shall be part of the cargoes they brought into the Union from the last foreign place at which they loaded. The fleets of colliers on the British coasts evince the possible benefits of such a regulation.

The consumption of fish, oil, whalebone, and other articles obtained through the fisheries, in the towns and counties that are convenient to navigation, has become much greater than is generally supposed. I am informed that no less than five thousand barrels of mackerel, salmon, and pickled codfish are vended in the city of Philadelphia annually; add to them the dried fish, oil, spermaceti candles, whalebone, &c., and it will be found a little fleet of sloops and schooners are employed in the business. The demand for the use of the inhabitants of those parts of the Union to which these supplies can be carried is already considerable, and the increase of our towns and manufactures will render it more so every year. In the present state of our navigation we can be in no doubt of procuring these supplies by means of our own vessels. The country that interferes most with us at our own market is Nova Scotia, which also, I am informed, has had some emigrants from our fishing towns since the decline of their business. Such encouragement to this valuable branch of commerce as would secure the benefits of it to our own people, without injuring our other essential interests, is certainly worth attention. The convention will probably find, on consideration of this point, that a duty or prohibition of foreign articles, such as our own fisheries supply, will be safe and expedient.

These are the principal encouragements to foreign commerce which occur to me at present as proper to form a part of a permanent system for the United States. Regulations for temporary purposes, such as restrictions and prohibitions affecting particular nations, I do not mean to speak of here. I must, however, observe, that they should be adopted with great prudence and deliberation, as they may affect us very unfavorably, if they should be tried in vain. In taking measures to promote manufactures, we must be careful that the injuries to the general interests of commerce do not exceed the advantages resulting from them. The circumstances of the country, as they relate to this business, should be dispassionately and thoroughly examined. Though it is confessed that the United States have full employment for all their citizens in the extensive field of agriculture, yet as we have a valuable body of manufacturers already here, and as many more will probably emigrate from Europe, who will choose to continue at their trades, and as we have some citizens so poor as not to be able to effect a little settlement on our waste lands, there is a real necessity for some wholesome general regulations on this head.

By taking care not to force manufactures in those States where the people are fewer, tillage much more profitable, and provisions dearer, than in several others, we shall give agriculture its full scope in the former, and leave all the benefits of manufacturing (so far as they are within our reach) to the latter. South Carolina, for instance, must manufacture to an evident loss, while the advancement of that business in Massachusetts will give the means of subsistence to many, whose occupations have been rendered unprofitable by the consequences of the Revolution. A liberal policy on this subject should be adopted, and the produce of the Southern States should be exchanged for such manufactures as can be made by the Northern, free from impost.

Another inducement to some salutary regulations on this subject will be suggested by considering some of our means of conducting manufactures. Unless business of this kind is carried on, certain great *natural powers* of the country will remain inactive and useless. Our numerous mill-seats, for example, by which flour, oil, paper, snuff, gunpowder, iron-work, woollen cloths, boards and scantling, and some other articles, are prepared or perfected, would be given by Providence in vain. If properly improved, they will save us an immense expense for the wages, provisions, clothing, and lodging of workmen, without diverting the people from their farms. Fire, as well as water, affords, if I may so speak, a fund of assistance, that cannot lie unused without an evident neglect of our best interests. Breweries, which we cannot estimate too highly, distilleries, sugar-houses, potteries, casting and steel furnaces, and several other works, are carried on by this powerful element, and attended with the same savings that were particularized in speaking of water machines. It is probable, also, that a frequent use of steam-engines will add greatly to this class of factories. In some cases where fire and water are not employed, horses are made to serve the purpose as well, and on much lower terms than men. The cheapness and the easy increase of these serviceable animals insure us this aid to any extent that occasion may require, which, however, is not likely to be very great.

The encouragement to agriculture afforded by some manufactories is a reason of solid weight in favor of pushing them with industry and spirit. Malt liquors, if generally used, linseed oil, starch, (and, were they not a poison to our morals and constitutions, I might add corn spirits,) would require more grain to make them than has been exported in any year since the Revolution. I cannot omit to observe here, that beer strengthens the arm of the laborer without debauching him, while the noxious drink now used enervates and corrupts him. The workers in leather, too, of every kind, in flax and hemp, in iron, wood, stone, and clay, in furs, horn, and many other articles, employ either the spontaneous productions of the earth or the fruits of cultivation.

A further encouragement to manufactures will result from improvements and discoveries in agriculture. There are many raw materials that could be produced in this country on a large scale, which have hitherto been very confined. Cotton, for many years before the Revolution, was not worth more than nine pence sterling in the West India Islands. The perfection of the factories in Europe has raised it to such a pitch, that, besides the prohibition against shipping it from the colonies to any foreign port, the price has risen fifty per cent. The consumers in Pennsylvania have paid near two shillings sterling for the importation of this year. This article must be worth the attention of the Southern planters.

If the facts and observations in the preceding part of this paper be admitted to be true and just, and if we take into consideration with them the acknowledged superiority of foreign commerce and the fisheries over our manufactories, we may come to the following conclusions: —

That the United States of America cannot make a proper use of the natural advantages of the country, nor promote her agriculture and other lesser interests, without manufactures; that they cannot enjoy the attainable benefits of commerce and the fisheries, without some general restrictions and prohibitions affecting foreign nations; that in forming these restrictions and prohibitions, as well as in establishing manufactories, there is occasion for great deliberation and wisdom, that nothing may be introduced which can interfere with the sale of our produce, or with the settlement and improvement of our waste lands.

It will not be amiss to draw a picture of our country, as it would really exist under the operation of a system of national laws formed upon these principles. While we indulge ourselves in the contemplation of a subject at once so interesting and dear, let us confine ourselves to substantial facts, and avoid those pleasing delusions into which the spirits and feelings of our countrymen have too long misled them.

In the foreground we should find the mass of our citizens the cultivators, (and what is happily for us, in most instances, the same thing,) the independent proprietors of the soil. Every wheel would appear in motion that could carry forward the interests of this great body of our people, and bring into action the inherent powers of the country. A portion of the produce of our lands would be consumed in the families or employed in the business of our manufacturers, a farther portion would be applied in the sustenance of our merchants and fishermen and their numerous assistants, and the remainder would be transported by those that could carry it at the lowest freight (that is, with the smallest deduction from the aggregate profits of the business of the country) to the best foreign markets.

On one side, we should see our manufacturers encouraging the tillers

of the earth by the consumption and employment of the fruits of their labors, and supplying them and the rest of their fellow-citizens with the instruments of their occupations, and the necessaries and conveniences of life, in every instance where it could be done without injuriously and unnecessarily increasing the distress of commerce, the labors of the husbandmen, and the difficulties of changing our native wilds into scenes of cultivation and plenty. Commerce, on the other hand, attentive to the general interests, would come forward with offers to range through foreign climates in search of those supplies which the manufacturers could not furnish but at too high a price, or which nature has not given us at home, in return for the surplus of those stores that had been drawn from the ocean or produced by the earth.

The commercial citizens of America have for some time felt the deepest distress; among the principal causes of their unhappy situation were the inconsiderate spirit of adventure to this country, which pervaded every kingdom in Europe, and the prodigious credits from thence given to our merchants. To these may be added the high spirits and the golden dreams that naturally followed such a war, closed with so much honor and success. Triumphant over a great enemy, courted by the most powerful nations in the world, it was not in human nature that America should immediately comprehend her new situation. Really possessed of the means of future greatness, she anticipated the most distant benefits of the Revolution, and considered them as already in her hands. She formed the highest expectations, many of which, however, serious experience has taught her to relinquish, and now that the thoughtless adventures and imprudent credits from foreign countries take place no more, and time has been given for cool reflection, she will see her true situation, and need not be discouraged.

The foundations of national wealth and consequence are so firmly laid in the United States, that no *foreign* power can undermine or destroy them. But the enjoyment of these substantial blessings is rendered precarious by domestic circumstances. Scarcely held together by a weak and half-formed federal constitution, the powers of our national government are unequal to the complete execution of any salutary purpose, foreign or domestic. The evils resulting from this unhappy state of things have again shocked our reviving credit, produced among our people alarming instances of disobedience to the laws, and, if not remedied, must destroy our property, liberties, and peace. Foreign powers, however disposed to favor us, can expect neither satisfaction nor benefit from treaties with Congress, while they are unable to enforce them. We can, therefore, hope to secure no privileges from them, if matters are thus conducted.

We must immediately remedy this defect, or suffer exceedingly.

Desultory commercial acts of the legislatures, formed on the impression of the moment, proceeding from no uniform or permanent principles clashing with the laws of the other States, and opposing those made in the preceding year by the enacting State, can no longer be supported if we are to continue one people. *A system which will promote the general interests with the smallest injury to particular ones, has become indispensably necessary.* Commerce is more affected by the distractions and evils arising from the uncertainty, opposition, and errors of our trade laws, than by the restrictions of any one power in Europe. A negative upon all commercial acts of the legislatures, if granted to Congress, would be perfectly safe, and must have an excellent effect. If thought expedient, it should be given as well with regard to those that exist, as to those that may be devised in future. Congress would thus be enabled to prevent every regulation that might oppose the general interests, and, by restraining the States from impolitic laws, would gradually bring our national commerce to order and perfection. Such of the ideas suggested in the preceding part of this paper as shall be honored with the public approbation, may be better digested, and, if they appear worthy of it, may form new articles of confederation, which would be the foundation of the commercial system.

I have ventured to hint at prohibitory powers, but shall leave that point, and the general power of regulating trade, to those who may undertake to consider the political objects of the convention, suggesting only the evident propriety of enabling Congress to prevent the importation of such foreign commodities as are made from our own raw materials. When any article of that kind can be supplied at home, upon as low terms as it can be imported, a manufacture of *our own produce*, so well established, ought not by any means to be sacrificed to the interests of foreign trade, or subjected to injury by the wild speculations of ignorant adventurers. In all cases, careful provision should be made for refunding the duties on exportation, which renders the impost a virtual excise without being liable to the objections against an actual one, and is a great encouragement to trade.

The restoration of public credit at home and abroad should be the first wish of our hearts, and requires every economy, every exertion we can make. The wise and virtuous axioms of our political constitutions, resulting from a lively and perfect sense of what is due from man to man, should prompt us to the discharge of debts of such peculiar obligation. We stand bound to no common creditors. The friendly foreigner, the widow and the orphan, the trustees of charity and religion, the patriotic citizen, the war-worn soldier, and a magnanimous ally, — these are the principal claimants upon the feeling and justice of America. Let her apply all her resources to this great duty and wipe away the darkest stain that has ever fallen upon her.

The general impost, the sale of the lands and every other unnecessary article of public property, restraining with a firm hand every needless expense of government and private life, steady and patient industry, with proper dispositions in the people, would relieve us of part of the burden, and enable Congress to commence their payments, and, with the aid of taxation, would put the sinking and funding of our debts within the power of all the States.

No. II. — Page 171.

To the Tradesmen and Manufacturers of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: —

Gentlemen, — The large importations from Europe of the manufactures of this country call loudly on us to join in some united effort to remedy a measure so destructive. It is with regret we observe, that since the peace the importations into this State have consisted of many articles which are usually manufactured among ourselves, on which thousands of individuals depend for the maintenance of themselves and families, and many of our brethren who have been engaged in the war, and are now returned to their occupations, rely for subsistence and support; we therefore view the continuance of such a practice as tending to the ruin of those several manufacturers, and impoverishing great numbers of industrious members of society.

Nothing can be more desirable, at this important period, than a firm, united exertion to prevent the evils we apprehend, and, as we conceive, the interest of the whole is so infinitely connected with those branches already affected, we should wish to establish a union upon so broad a basis that it cannot fail of producing the most extensive and permanent advantages to the collective body of mechanics.

We conceive ourselves interested in one common cause, although the evils we complain of are not equally felt by all. Yet we trust our brethren will view the concern as general, and will be ready to join with us in all legal measures to obtain a regulation in the present system of commerce, which, if not speedily checked, must prove fatal to the whole.

If ever the attention of the manufacturers and mechanics of this Commenwealth was required, *this is the interesting moment.* If we let this opportunity pass without some endeavors on our part, we shall for ever have reason to repent of our remissness. Every day brings fresh proofs of the necessity of our exertions, and we cannot answer it to God, our

COUNTRY, our POSTERITY, or OURSELVES, if we are inactive at this decisive crisis.

The restrictions by the British government on all American vessels, and the shipping of goods from England to America in British bottoms, must eventually operate to the destruction of ship-building among ourselves, and render our vessels of little value in prosecuting voyages to any part of the British dominions, and entirely destroy our carrying trade, an object so essentially important to America.

We have reason to apprehend, from what has hitherto taken place, that not only our ship-building will be ruined, but that every article of rigging, sails, blocks, and also cordage ready fitted for the rigger, together with all the variety of ship-chandlery, will soon be imported by British merchants or factors, or brought in vessels freighted as English bottoms. The consequence must be the entire ruin of our ship-builders, blacksmiths, rope-makers, riggers, block-makers, sail-makers, with every other branch of business connected with the equipment of vessels.

We need not mention other branches of trade and manufacture more immediately affected by foreign importation, — they are too keenly felt to need repetition, — being sensible that every implement throughout the whole system of mechanism will ere long (without speedy assistance) be wrested from the hands of the industrious American.

These things are not surmises, they are *truths* which cannot be controverted; they therefore require our joining in a petition to the next General Court, praying that such duties may be laid on foreign importations of all articles usually manufactured here, as will prevent their being brought among us to the injury of such individuals as are now employed in those branches.

As the time is now approaching for the choice of persons to represent us the ensuing year, on whom we greatly rely for the success of our petition, it is hoped the tradesmen and manufacturers will exert their whole influence to make choice of those men who are avowedly friends to the manufactures of this country. Your own judgment will dictate to you such persons, whose connections, whose steadiness, and whose patriotism will bear the test of scrutiny.

We are, Gentlemen, with every sentiment of esteem, your friends and brethren in a common cause.

JOHN GRAY.

The following letter was addressed to Governor Bowdoin: —

May it please your Excellency, — We, the Committee of Tradesmen and Manufacturers of the town of Boston, do in their names congratulate your Excellency on your appointment to the chief seat of government.

It affords us the greatest satisfaction, that a gentleman is placed at the head of this Commonwealth who is so particularly acquainted with the interests of the country, and on whose integrity, wisdom, and decision we can confidently rely.

Your Excellency's disposition to encourage the manufactures of this country (the embarrassed state of which has not escaped your notice) gives us the most pleasing expectation of your patronage and support, and we anticipate the fond idea that measures will soon be adopted by this State fully adequate to the removal of the difficulties under which we at present labor.

The unanimity which so generally prevails throughout the several branches of the legislature, we conceive a happy presage of those national blessings so earnestly desired by every sincere friend to the independence of America.

May your administration be happy. May union and stability prevail in all our public counsels. And may your Excellency, by a faithful discharge of the important duties of your station, ever receive the warmest acknowledgments of the people over whom you preside.

To which his Excellency made the following reply. —

GENTLEMEN, — I am greatly indebted to the worthy body of tradesmen and manufacturers in the town of Boston for their congratulations, and in particular to you, Gentlemen, for the obliging manner in which you have communicated them.

You certainly are not mistaken in your idea of my disposition to encourage the manufactures of this country, and for that purpose I hope to see measures adopted fully adequate to the removal of the difficulties under which the several classes of my fellow-citizens do at present unhappily labor. To the forwarding and completing of such adequate measures, I shall be happy to contribute.

I thank you for your good wishes, and especially for the wish that my administration may be happy. Be assured, Gentlemen, it shall be my endeavor to make it so to every class of citizens throughout the Commonwealth, and particularly to the tradesmen and manufacturers of Boston, whose prosperity it will give me great pleasure to see, but much greater to promote.

JAMES BOWDOIN.

No. III. — P. 178.

Statement of Manufactures in Virginia.

COTTON. — Three cotton manufactories, which have 14,200 spindles, 263 looms, and employ 610 hands or operatives. They consume

$ 153,000 of raw material, and turn out $ 378,000 in value of cotton fabrics per annum, with a capital of $ 477,500.

Iron. — There are two rolling-mills, one nail factory, three extensive iron founderies, two saw and axe manufactories, and three extensive establishments for the manufacture of agricultural implements, in which is a greater or less amount of castings. The capital invested in these is about $ 500,000; they employ about 325 men, many of them with families, and consume about $ 200,000 worth of iron and $ 50,000 worth of coal, and turn out fabrics now to the value of about $ 700,000.

Besides the above, which embraces cotton and iron alone, there is an extensive paper-mill, a woollen manufactory, flouring-mills that manufacture about 100,000 barrels of flour per annum, upward of $ 1,000,000 of tobacco manufactured into chewing tobacco per annum, and in addition coach factories, manufactories of boots and shoes, guns and locks, one of pianos, brass founderies, &c., &c.

Just previous to the adoption of the present tariff, the manufacturing operations of Richmond, Petersburg, and other places throughout the State, were curtailed one half. They gradually recovered during the first six months after the passage of the tariff, and most rapidly during the last eight months; so that they are all doing a fair business now, while some of them, the cotton factories, are pushed to their utmost to supply the demand, which they are scarcely able to do.

Richmond memorialized Congress for the passage of that tariff, and so did Petersburg, I believe. The memorial sent from Richmond, which had the largest number of signatures ever put to a paper in the city, asserted these propositions: —

"That duties should be adequate to the purposes of revenue. That they should be discriminating also, not only with a view to favor domestic productions, but to benefit the consumer by enlarging the supply, and by adding domestic competition, which is always active, to foreign competition, which is sometimes inefficient, and never regular and constant."

It was also further asserted, that, "under the tariff policies of different civilized nations, the only mode of relieving or aiding agriculture was by diverting to other occupations a portion of the labor applied to it, and by increasing, at the same time, the domestic market for its products; and that therefore no branch of industry in the country has a clearer interest in the due encouragement and support of home manufactures than the agricultural."

The total capital invested in the more important manufactures of Richmond is about $ 5,000,000.

The town of Petersburg has eight cotton manufacturing establishments now in full operation. She has leased three flouring-mills a paper-mill, a woollen factory, &c., with a fixed capital of near

$ 1,000,000 in cotton manufactories, $ 125,000 in flouring-mills, and $ 1,000,000 in tobacco manufactories.

Wheeling, with a population of over 10,000 inhabitants, has 136 establishments for the manufacture of domestic goods, raising annually 1,243,000 bushels of coal, and giving employment to more than 1,700 persons, yielding an annual product worth $ 2,000,000. Her chief manufactures are iron castings, bar iron, and glass. Near Wheeling, and in the vicinity of Richmond, 7,000,000 bushels of coal are raised annually. Near Richmond alone, the quantity raised exceeds 5,000,000 bushels.

The small town of Fredericksburg has several iron and woollen manufactories, which, with flouring and other mills, employ a capital of about $ 250,000.

Lynchburg. — This large and flourishing town, with near 7,000 inhabitants, is a place of large operations in the manufacture of tobacco, iron, flour, cotton, &c., amounting to several millions of dollars annually.

From other places where manufactories are in operation, I have no particular information.

General Estimate.

In Wheeling, Petersburg, Richmond, Lynchburg, Fredericksburg, and Kanawha County, there are more than $ 11,000,000 employed in the leading manufactures of these places. There are, besides, cotton manufactories, blast furnaces, and founderies, in many of the counties. Virginia has every element and every advantage for manufacturing. Cotton, iron, lead, hemp, and wool are diffused in each of her four grand divisions, and salt in the Southwest. Her water power is not excelled, and I doubt whether it is equalled, in any other State in the Union. The importance of her manufactures is far better appreciated among her citizens than formerly. I doubt whether so rapid, so general, and so great a change in favor of this object has taken place anywhere else in the United States as has occurred in this old Commonwealth during the last two years. She was the tobacco State a few years ago; now, the West, but for the peculiar excellence of her tobacco, would crowd her out of foreign markets, or put the price down so low that the cost of its productions, and the advantage of more profitable pursuits she enjoys by reason of her position, would induce her perhaps to abandon entirely, certainly in a great degree, its culture in a few years.

Last year there were received at the port of New Orleans, from the tobacco regions of the West, more than twice as many hogsheads of tobacco as the entire crop of Virginia, while a large portion of the Western crop was *via* Pennsylvania to Baltimore and elsewhere. This is

an important fact regarding the destinies of Virginia. She must become a manufacturing State.

The people generally are fast giving up their old notions on the tariff, or those notions which were once regarded as peculiarly Virginian. A majority may now be found in favor of the tariff views, as advocated by the people of Richmond in their memorial adverted to in the early part of this review.

Hurried as I am, I deem it of importance to give you this additional sketch, showing the probable amount of raw cotton manufactured or used by our factories in Virginia.

		Bales.	
In Petersburg, by the	Elluch Co.,	1,500	
" "	Matoaca Co.,	1,300	
" "	Mechanics' Co.,	1,200	
" "	Merchants' Co.,	1,200	
" "	Canal Co.,	1,000	
" "	Battersea,	600	
" "	Washington,	400	
" "	Eagle,	400	
			7,600
In Richmond, "	Manchester,	2,200	
" "	Richmond,	1,400	
" "	Spring Hill,	400	
			4,000
In Albemarle County,	Thadwell,	500	
" "	Union,	400	
			900
In Isle of Wight County,			600
In Fredericksburg,			600
In Lynchburg,			600
In the other smaller factories in the State,			1,000
			15,300

No. IV. — Page 178.

New York, 6th November, 1843.

My dear Sir, — In conformity with my promise on Saturday last, I now send you the annexed statement of prices of articles of American manufacture in this city, in the months of July, August. and September of 1842, and the corresponding months of 1843.

Prices of Nails in 1842.

July,	4¼ to 4½ cents per lb.
August,	4¼ to 4½ " "
September,	4¼ to 4¾ " "

Prices of best Penn. Pig Iron, 1842.

July, Aug., and Sept., $30 per ton.

Penn. rolled Bar Iron, 1842.

July, August, and to Sept. 10th, $70.
From Sept. 10th to October 1st, $75.

Prices of Nails in 1843.

July,	3¾ cents per lb.
August,	4 " "
September,	4 " "

Prices of best Penn. Pig Iron, 1843

July, Aug., and Sept., $25 per ton.

Penn. rolled Bar Iron, 1843.

July, August, and September, $65

Since August, 1842, there have been but very few, if any, nails manufactured in this country of imported iron. Prior to January, 1842, the bulk of nails sold in this market were from Swedes' iron, when the wholesale price of that description of iron seldom reached so low a point as $ 80 per ton. Since August, 1842, the price has ranged from $ 70 to $ 75 per ton. Competition among American manufacturers (aided, probably, by low prices in Europe) has reduced the prices of bar iron and nails in this country. Prices of iron in Europe have been depressed in consequence of our tariff, and consequently it is the operation of the tariff alone which now enables the consumer to purchase these articles at their present reduced rates. I have long been satisfied that English iron, particularly, could be afforded to us even under the present tariff; the prices in England being regulated rather by what the articles would command here, than the cost of production there. If this be true, the reduction of duties designed by the compromise tariff was defeated, and the benefit accrued to the foreign producers.

Since writing the above, a friend has furnished me with the following facts relative to the prices of Scotch pig-iron in this city, and also in Scotland, in August, 1842, and August, 1843: —

Say —	In August, 1842, the price in this city was, .	$ 25.00 per ton
	In August, 1843, " " " .	$ 23.50 per ton.
Say —	In August, 1842, the price of same iron in Scotland was	£ 2 15*s.* per ton.
	In August, 1843, it would be, ...	£ 2 per ton.

No. V. — Page 179.

Extract from an Address to the States, adopted by Congress on the 24th of April, 1783, on the Report of a Committee consisting of Messrs. Madison, Hamilton, and Ellsworth.

If other motives than those of justice be requisite on this occasion, no nation could ever feel stronger; for to whom are the debts to be paid?

To an ally, in the first place, who, to the exertion of his arms in support of our cause, has added the succor of his treasure; who, to his important loans, has added liberal donations; and whose loans themselves carry the impression of his magnanimity and friendship.

To individuals in a foreign country, in the next place, who were the first to give so precious a token of their confidence in our justice, and of their friendship for our cause, and who are members of a republic which was second in espousing our rank among nations.

Another class of creditors is *that illustrious and patriotic band of our fellow-citizens*, whose blood and whose bravery have defended the liberties of their country; who have patiently borne, among other dis-

tresses, the privation of their stipends, while the distresses of their country disabled it from bestowing them; and who even now ask for no more than such a portion of their dues as will enable them to retire from the field of victory and glory into the bosom of peace and private citizenship, and for such effectual security for the residue of their claims as their country is now unquestionably able to provide.

The remaining class of creditors is composed partly of such of our fellow-citizens as originally lent to the public the use of their funds, or have since manifested most confidence in their country by receiving transfers from the lenders, and partly of those whose property has been either advanced or assumed for the public service.

To discriminate the merits of these several descriptions of creditors would be a task equally unnecessary and invidious. If the voice of humanity plead more loudly in favor of some than of others, the voice of policy, no less than of justice, pleads in favor of all. A wise nation will never permit those who relieve the wants of their country, or who rely most on its faith, its firmness, and its resources, when either of them is distrusted, to suffer by the event.

Let it be remembered, finally, that it has ever been the pride and boast of America, that the rights for which she contended were the rights of human nature. By the blessing of the Author of these rights on the means exerted for their defence, they have prevailed against all opposition, and form the basis of thirteen independent States. No instance has heretofore occurred, nor can any instance be expected hereafter to occur, in which the unadulterated forms of republican government can pretend to so fair an opportunity of justifying themselves by their fruits. In this view, the citizens of the United States are responsible for the greatest trust ever confided to a political society. If justice, good faith, honor, gratitude, and all other qualities which ennoble the character of a nation, and fulfil the ends of governments, be the fruits of our establishment, the cause of liberty will acquire a dignity and lustre which it has never yet enjoyed, and an example will be set which cannot but have the most favorable influence on the rights of mankind. If, on the other side, our government should be unfortunately blotted with the reverse of these cardinal and essential virtues, the great cause which we have engaged to vindicate will be dishonored and betrayed; the last and fairest experiment in favor of the rights of human nature will be turned against them, and their patrons and friends exposed to be insulted and silenced by the votaries of tyranny and usurpation.

The Landing at Plymouth

The Landing at Plymouth*

The great Pilgrim festival was celebrated on the 22d of December, 1843, by the New England Society of New York, with uncommon spirit and success. A commemorative oration was delivered in the morning by Hon. Rufus Choate, in a style of eloquence rarely equalled. The public dinner of the Society, at the Astor House, at which M. H. Grinnell, Esq., presided, was attended by a very large company, composed of the members of the Society and their invited guests. Several appropriate toasts having been given and responded to by the distinguished individuals present, George Griswold, Esq., rose to offer one in honor of Mr. Webster. After a few remarks complimentary to that gentleman, in reference to his services in refuting the doctrine of nullification and in averting the danger of war by the treaty of Washington, Mr. Griswold gave the following toast: —

"Daniel Webster, — the gift of New England to his country, his whole country, and nothing but his country."

This was received with great applause, and on rising to respond to it, Mr. Webster was greeted with nine enthusiastic cheers, and the most hearty and prolonged approbation. When silence was restored, he spoke as follows: —

Mr. President: — I have a grateful duty to perform in acknowledging the kindness of the sentiment thus expressed towards me. And yet I must say, Gentlemen, that I rise upon this occasion under a consciousness that I may probably disappoint highly raised, too highly raised expectations. In the scenes of this evening, and in the scene of this day, my part is an humble one. I can enter into no competition with the fresh-

* A Speech delivered on the 22d of December, 1843, at the Public Dinner of the New England Society of New York, in Commemoration of the Landing of the Pilgrims.

er geniuses of those more eloquent gentlemen, learned and reverend, who have addressed this Society. I may perform, however, the humbler, but sometimes useful, duty of contrast, by adding the dark ground of the picture, which shall serve to bring out the more brilliant colors.

I must receive, Gentlemen, the sentiment proposed by the worthy and distinguished citizen of New York before me, as intended to convey the idea that, as a citizen of New England, as a son, a child, a *creation* of New England, I may be yet supposed to entertain, in some degree, that enlarged view of my duty as a citizen of the United States and as a public man, which may, in some small measure, commend me to the regard of the whole country. While I am free to confess, Gentlemen, that there is no compliment of which I am more desirous to be thought worthy, I will add, that a compliment of that kind could have proceeded from no source more agreeable to my own feelings than from the gentleman who has proposed it, — an eminent merchant, the member of a body of eminent merchants, known throughout the world for their intelligence and enterprise. I the more especially feel this, Gentlemen, because, whether I view the present state of things or recur to the history of the past, I can in neither case be ignorant how much that profession, and its distinguished members, from an early day of our history, have contributed to make the country what it is, and the government what it is.

Gentlemen, the free nature of our institutions, and the popular form of those governments which have come down to us from the Rock of Plymouth, give scope to intelligence, to talent, enterprise, and public spirit, from all classes making up the great body of the community. And the country has received benefit in all its history and in all its exigencies, of the most eminent and striking character, from persons of the class to which my friend before me belongs. Who will ever forget that the first name signed to our ever-memorable and ever-glorious Declaration of Independence is the name of John Hancock, a merchant of Boston? Who will ever forget that, in the most disastrous days of the Revolution, when the treasury of the country was bankrupt, with unpaid navies and starving armies, it was a merchant, — Robert Morris of Philadelphia, — who, by a noble sacrifice of his own fortune, as well as by the exercise of his

John Hancock

From the Painting by John Singleton Copley,
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

A. W. Elson & Co. Boston.

great financial abilities, sustained and supported the wise men of the country in council, and the brave men of the country in the field of battle? Nor are there wanting more recent instances. I have the pleasure to see near me, and near my friend who proposed this sentiment, the son of an eminent merchant of New England (Mr. Goodhue), an early member of the Senate of the United States, always consulted, always respected, in whatever belonged to the duty and the means of putting in operation the financial and commercial system of the country; and this mention of the father of my friend brings to my mind the memory of his great colleague, the early associate of Hamilton and of Ames, trusted and beloved by Washington, consulted on all occasions connected with the administration of the finances, the establishment of the treasury department, the imposition of the first rates of duty, and with every thing that belonged to the commercial system of the United States, — George Cabot, of Massachusetts.

I will take this occasion to say, Gentlemen, that there is no truth better developed and established in the history of the United States, from the formation of the Constitution to the present time, than this, — that the mercantile classes, the great commercial masses of the country, whose affairs connect them strongly with every State in the Union and with all the nations of the earth, whose business and profession give a sort of nationality to their character, — that no class of men among us, from the beginning, have shown a stronger and firmer devotion to whatsoever has been designed, or to whatever has tended, to preserve the union of these States and the stability of the free government under which we live. The Constitution of the United States, in regard to the various municipal regulations and local interests, has left the States individual, disconnected, isolated. It has left them their own codes of criminal law; it has left them their own system of municipal regulations. But there was one great interest, one great concern, which, from the very nature of the case, was no longer to be left under the regulations of the then thirteen, afterwards twenty, and now twenty-six States but was committed, necessarily committed, to the care, the protection, and the regulation of one government; and this was that great unit, as it has been called, the commerce of the United States. There is no commerce of New York, no commerce of

Massachusetts, none of Georgia, none of Alabama or Louisiana. All and singular, in the aggregate and in all its parts, is the commerce of the United States, regulated at home by a uniform system of laws under the authority of the general government, and protected abroad under the flag of our government, the glorious *E Pluribus Unum*, and guarded, if need be, by the power of the general government all over the world. There is, therefore, Gentlemen, nothing more cementing, nothing that makes us more cohesive, nothing that more repels all tendencies to separation and dismemberment, than this great, this common, I may say this overwhelming interest of one commerce, one general system of trade and navigation, one everywhere and with every nation of the globe. There is no flag of any particular American State seen in the Pacific seas, or in the Baltic, or in the Indian Ocean. Who knows, or who hears, there of your proud State, or of my proud State? Who knows, or who hears, of any thing, at the extremest north or south, or at the antipodes, — in the remotest regions of the Eastern or Western Sea, — who ever hears, or knows, of any thing but an American ship, or of any American enterprise of a commercial character that does not bear the impression of the American Union with it?

It would be a presumption of which I cannot be guilty, Gentlemen, for me to imagine for a moment, that, among the gifts which New England has made to our common country, I am any thing more than one of the most inconsiderable. I readily bring to mind the great men, not only with whom I have met, but those of the generation before me, who now sleep with their fathers, distinguished in the Revolution, distinguished in the formation of the Constitution and in the early administration of the government, always and everywhere distinguished; and I shrink in just and conscious humiliation before their established character and established renown; and all that I venture to say, and all that I venture to hope may be thought true, in the sentiment proposed, is, that, so far as mind and purpose, so far as intention and will, are concerned, I may be found among those who are capable of embracing the whole country of which they are members in a proper, comprehensive, and patriotic regard. We all know that the objects which are nearest are the objects which are dearest; family affections, neighborhood affections social relations, these in truth are nearest and dearest to us all:

but whosoever shall be able rightly to adjust the graduation of his affections, and to love his friends and his neighbors, and his country, as he ought to love them, merits the commendation pronounced by the philosophic poet upon him

"Qui didicit patriæ quid debeat, et quid amicis"

Gentlemen, it has been my fortune, in the little part which I have acted in public life, for good or for evil to the community, to be connected entirely with that government which, within the limits of constitutional power, exercises jurisdiction over all the States and all the people. My friend at the end of the table on my left has spoken pleasantly to us to-night of the reputed miracles of tutelar saints. In a sober sense, in a sense of deep conviction, I say that the emergence of this country from British domination, and its union under its present form of government beneath the general Constitution of the country, if not a miracle, is, I do not say the most, but one of the most fortunate, the most admirable, the most auspicious occurrences, which have ever fallen to the lot of man. Circumstances have wrought out for us a state of things which, in other times and other regions, philosophy has dreamed of, and theory has proposed, and speculation has suggested, but which man has never been able to accomplish. I mean the government of a great nation over a vastly extended portion of the surface of the earth, *by means of local institutions for local purposes, and general institutions for general purposes.* I know of nothing in the history of the world, notwithstanding the great league of Grecian states, notwithstanding the success of the Roman system, (and certainly there is no exception to the remark in modern history,) — I know of nothing so suitable on the whole for the great interests of a great people spread over a large portion of the globe, as the provision of local legislation for local and municipal purposes, with, not a confederacy, nor a loose binding together of separate parts, but a limited, positive general government for positive general purposes, over the whole. We. may derive eminent proofs of this truth from the past and the present. What see we to-day in the agitations on the other side of the Atlantic? I speak of them, of course without expressing any opinion on questions of politics in a foreign country; but I speak of them as an occurrence which shows the great expediency, the utility, I may say

the necessity, of local legislation. If, in a country on the other side of the water (Ireland), there be some who desire a severance of one part of the empire from another, under a proposition of repeal, there are others who propose a continuance of the existing relation under a federative system: and what is this? No more, and no less, than an approximation to that system under which we live, which for local, municipal purposes shall have a local legislature, and for general purposes a general legislature.

This becomes the more important when we consider that the United States stretch over so many degrees of latitude, — that they embrace such a variety of climate, — that various conditions and relations of society naturally call for different laws and regulations. Let me ask whether the legislature of New York could wisely pass laws for the government of Louisiana, or whether the legislature of Louisiana could wisely pass laws for Pennsylvania or New York? Every body will say, "No." And yet the interests of New York and Pennsylvania and Louisiana, in whatever concerns their relations between themselves and their general relations with all the states of the world, are found to be perfectly well provided for, and adjusted with perfect congruity, by committing these general interests to one common government, the result of popular general elections among them all.

I confess, Gentlemen, that having been, as I have said, in my humble career in public life, employed in that portion of the public service which is connected with the general government, I have contemplated, as the great object of every proceeding, not only the particular benefit of the moment, or the exigency of the occasion, but the preservation of this system; for I do consider it so much the result of circumstances, and that so much of it is due to fortunate concurrence, as well as to the sagacity of the great men acting upon those occasions, — that it is an experiment of such remarkable and renowned success, — that he is a fool or a madman who would wish to try that experiment a second time. I see to-day, and we all see, that the descendants of the Puritans who landed upon the Rock of Plymouth; the followers of Raleigh, who settled Virginia and North Carolina; he who lives where the truncheon of empire, so to speak, was borne by Smith; the inhabitants of Georgia; he who settled under the auspices of France at the mouth of

the Mississippi; the Swede on the Delaware, the Quaker of Pennsylvania, — all find, at this day, their common interest, their common protection, their common *glory*, under the united government, which leaves them all, nevertheless, in the administration of their own municipal and local affairs, to be Frenchmen, or Swedes, or Quakers, or whatever they choose. And when one considers that this system of government, I will not say has produced, because God and nature and circumstances have had an agency in it, — but when it is considered that this system has not prevented, but has rather encouraged, the growth of the people of this country from three millions, on the glorious 4th of July, 1776, to seventeen millions now, who is there that will say, upon this hemisphere, — nay, who is there that will stand up in any hemisphere, who is there in any part of the world, that will say that the great experiment of a united republic has *failed* in America? And yet I know, Gentlemen, I feel, that this united system is held together by strong tendencies to union, at the same time that it is kept from too much leaning toward consolidation by a strong tendency in the several States to support each its own power and consideration. In the physical world it is said, that

"All nature's difference keeps all nature's peace,"

and there is in the political world this same harmonious difference, this regular play of the positive and negative powers (if I may so say), which, at least for one glorious half-century, has kept us as we have been kept, and made us what we are.

But, Gentlemen, I must not allow myself to pursue this topic. It is a sentiment so commonly repeated by me upon all public occasions, and upon all private occasions, and everywhere, that I forbear to dwell upon it now. It is the union of these States, it is the system of government under which we live, beneath the Constitution of the United States, happily framed, wisely adopted, successfully administered for fifty years, — it is mainly this, I say, that gives us power at home and credit abroad. And, for one, I never stop to consider the power or wealth or greatness of a State. I tell you, Mr. Chairman, I care nothing for your Empire State as such. Delaware and Rhode Island are as high in my regard as New York. In population, in power, in the government over us, you have a greater share. You would have

of Castile and Aragon; but as a place for the plantation of colonies, as a place for the habitation of men, as a place to which laws and religion, and manners and science, were to be transferred, as a place in which the creatures of God should multiply and fill the earth, under friendly skies and with religious hearts, he gave it to the whole world, he gave it to universal man! From this seminal principle, and from a handful, a hundred saints, blessed of God and ever honored of men, landed on the shores of Plymouth and elsewhere along the coast, united, as I have said already more than once, in the process of time, with the settlement at Jamestown, has sprung this great people of which we are a portion.

I do not reckon myself among quite the oldest of the land, and yet it so happens that very recently I recurred to an exulting speech or oration of my own, in which I spoke of my country as consisting of nine millions of people. I could hardly persuade myself that within the short time which had elapsed since that epoch our population had doubled; and that at the present moment there does exist most unquestionably as great a probability of its continued progress, in the same ratio, as has ever existed in any previous time. I do not know whose imagination is fertile enough, I do not know whose conjectures, I may almost say, are *wild* enough to tell what may be the progress of wealth and population in the United States in half a century to come. All we know is, here is a people of from seventeen to twenty millions, intelligent, educated, freeholders, freemen, republicans, possessed of all the means of modern improvement, modern science, arts, literature, with the world before them! There is nothing to check them till they touch the shores of the Pacific, and then, they are so much accustomed to water, that *that's* a facility, and no obstruction!

So much, Gentlemen, for this branch of the English race; but what has happened, meanwhile, to England herself since the period of the departure of the Puritans from the coast of Lincolnshire, from the English Boston? Gentlemen, in speaking of the progress of English power, of English dominion and authority, from that period to the present, I shall be understood, of course, as neither entering into any defence or any accusation of the policy which has conducted her to her present state. As to the justice of her wars, the necessity of her conquests, the

propriety of those acts by which she has taken possession of so great a portion of the globe, it is not the business of the present occasion to inquire. *Neque teneo, neque refello.* But I speak of them, or intend to speak of them, as facts of the most extraordinary character, unequalled in the history of any nation on the globe, and the consequences of which may and must reach through a thousand generations. The Puritans left England in the reign of James the First. England herself had then become somewhat settled and established in the Protestant faith, and in the quiet enjoyment of property, by the previous energetic, long, and prosperous reign of Elizabeth. Her successor was James the Sixth of Scotland, now become James the First of England; and here was a union of the crowns, but not of the kingdoms, — a very important distinction. Ireland was held by a military power, and one cannot but see that at that day, whatever may be true or untrue in more recent periods of her history, Ireland was held by England by the two great potencies, the power of the sword and the power of confiscation. In other respects, England was nothing like the England which we now behold. Her foreign possessions were quite inconsiderable. She had some hold on the West India Islands; she had Acadia, or Nova Scotia, which King James granted, by wholesale, for the endowment of the knights whom he created by hundreds. And what has been her progress? Did she then possess Gibraltar, the key to the Mediterranean? Did she possess a port in the Mediterranean? Was Malta hers? Were the Ionian Islands hers? Was the southern extremity of Africa, was the Cape of Good Hope, hers? Were the whole of her vast possessions in India hers? Was her great Australian empire hers? While that branch of her population which followed the western star, and under its guidance committed itself to the duty of settling, fertilizing, and peopling an unknown wilderness in the West, were pursuing their destinies, other causes, providential doubtless, were leading English power eastward and southward, in consequence and by means of her naval prowess, and the extent of her commerce, until in our day we have seen that within the Mediterranean, on the western coast and at the southern extremity of Africa, in Arabia, in hither India and farther India, she has a population *ten times* as great as that of the British Isles two centuries ago. And recently, as we

have witnessed, — I will not say with how much truth and justice, policy or impolicy, I do not speak at all to the morality of the action, I only speak to the *fact*, — she has found admission into China, and has carried the Christian religion and the Protestant faith to the doors of three hundred millions of people.

It has been said that whosoever would see the Eastern world before it turns into a Western world must make his visit soon, because steamboats and omnibuses, commerce, and all the arts of Europe, are extending themselves from Egypt to Suez, from Suez to the Indian seas, and from the Indian seas all over the explored regions of the still farther East.

Now, Gentlemen, I do not know what practical views or what practical results may take place from this great expansion of the power of the two branches of Old England. It is not for me to say. I only can see, that on this continent *all* is to be *Anglo-American* from Plymouth Rock to the Pacific seas, from the north pole to California. That is certain; and in the Eastern world, I only see that you can hardly place a finger on a map of the world and be an *inch* from an English settlement.

Gentlemen, if there be any thing in the supremacy of races, the experiment now in progress will develop it. If there be any truth in the idea, that those who issued from the great Caucasian fountain, and spread over Europe, are to react on India and on Asia, and to act on the whole Western world, it may not be for us, nor our children, nor our grandchildren to see it, but it will be for our descendants of some generation to see the extent of that progress and dominion of the favored races.

For myself, I believe there is no limit fit to be assigned to it by the human mind, because I find at work everywhere, on both sides of the Atlantic, under various forms and degrees of restriction on the one hand, and under various degrees of motive and stimulus on the other hand, in these branches of a common race, the great principle *of the freedom of human thought, and the respectability of individual character.* I find everywhere an elevation of the character of man as man, an elevation of the individual as a component part of society. I find everywhere a rebuke of the idea, that the many are made for the few, or that government is any thing but an *agency* for mankind. And I care not beneath what zone, frozen, temperate, or torrid; I care

not of what complexion, white or brown; I care not under what circumstances of climate or cultivation, if I can find a race of men on an inhabitable spot of earth whose general sentiment it is, and whose general feeling it is, that government is made for man — man, as a religious, moral, and social being — and not man for government, there I know that I shall find prosperity and happiness.

Gentlemen, I forbear from these remarks. I recur with pleasure to the sentiment which I expressed at the commencement of my observations. I repeat the gratification which I feel at having been referred to on this occasion by a distinguished member of the mercantile profession; and without detaining you further, I beg to offer as a sentiment, —

"*The mercantile interest of the United States*, always and everywhere friendly to a united and free government."

Mr. Webster sat down amid loud and repeated applause; and immediately after, at the request of the President, rose and said: —

Gentlemen, I have the permission of the President to call your attention to the circumstance that a distinguished foreigner is at the table to-night, Mr. Aldham; a gentleman, I am happy to say, of my own hard-working profession, and a member of the English Parliament from the great city of Leeds. A traveller in the United States, in the most unostentatious manner, he has done us the honor, at the request of the Society, to be present to-night. I rise, Gentlemen, to propose his health. He is of that Old England of which I have been speaking; of that Old England with whom we had some fifty years ago rather a serious family quarrel, — terminated in a manner, I believe, not particularly disadvantageous to either of us. He will find in this, his first visit to our country, many things to remind him of his own home, and the pursuits in which he is engaged in that home. If he will go into our courts of law, he will find those who practise there referring to the same books of authority, acknowledging the same principles, discussing the same subjects which he left under discussion in Westminster Hall. If he go into our public assemblies, he will find the same rules of procedure — possibly not always quite as regularly observed — as he left behind him in that house of Parliament of which he is a member. At any rate, he will find us a branch of that great family to which he

himself belongs, and I doubt not that, in his sojourn among us, in the acquaintances he may form, the notions he may naturally imbibe, he will go home to his own country somewhat better satisfied with what he has seen and learned on this side of the Atlantic, and somewhat more convinced of the great importance to both countries of preserving the peace that at present subsists between them. I propose to you, Gentlemen, the health of Mr. Aldham.

Mr. Aldham rose and said: — "Mr. President and Gentlemen of the New England Society, I little expected to be called on to take a part in the proceedings of this evening; but I am very happy in being afforded an opportunity of expressing my grateful acknowledgments for the very cordial hospitality which you have extended to me, and the very agreeable intellectual treat with which I have been favored this evening. It was with no little astonishment that I listened to the terms in which I was introduced to you by a gentleman whom I so much honor (Mr. Webster). The kind and friendly terms in which he referred to me were, indeed, quite unmerited by their humble object, and nothing, indeed, could have been more inappropriate. It is impossible for any stranger to witness such a scene as this without the greatest interest. It is the celebration of an event which already stands recorded as one of the most interesting and momentous occurrences which ever took place in the annals of our race. And an Englishman especially cannot but experience the deepest emotion as he regards such a scene. Every thing which he sees, every emblem employed in this celebration, many of the topics introduced, remind him most impressively of that community of ancestry which exists between his own countrymen and that great race which peoples this continent, and which, in enterprise, ingenuity, and commercial activity, — in all the elements indeed of a great and prosperous nation, — is certainly not exceeded, perhaps not equalled, by any other nation on the face of the globe. Gentlemen, I again thank you for the honor you have done me, and conclude by expressing the hope that the event may continue to be celebrated in the manner which its importance and interest merit."

Mr. Aldham sat down amid great applause.

Mass Meeting at Albany

Mass Meeting at Albany*

Among the numerous political meetings in the summer and autumn of 1844, none, perhaps, surpassed that which was held at Albany on the 27th of August. It was attended by an immense number of the inhabitants of that city and of the neighboring counties, and by many thousands of persons from a distance. By some estimates the numbers present exceeded fifty thousand. Among the distinguished persons present by invitation were Mr. Webster, Messrs. Dawson and Berrien of Georgia, Messrs. Granger, Hasbrouck, and Greely, of New York, and others of political eminence from several parts of the country. The meeting, of course, was held in the open air. Samuel Stevens, Esq. of Albany, presided, and, after a few appropriate remarks by him on the nature of the occasion, Mr. Webster was introduced to the meeting and delivered the following speech.

In the history of states and of governments, as in the lives of individuals, there are epochs at which it is wise to pause, to review the past, to consider attentively the present, and to contemplate probable futurity. We are, fellow-citizens, upon the eve of a general election, full of importance and of interest, involving questions which rise far above all considerations of the personal qualities of the candidates for office, questions of the greatest and the nearest bearing upon present and existing interests, and likely to affect the prosperity of the country for a long time to come.

In my judgment, therefore, it is highly proper, in such a state of things and on such an occasion, that we should bring the past into our immediate presence, and consider and examine it; that we should ponder assiduously existing interests and exist-

* A Speech delivered at a very large Meeting held at Albany, on the 27th of August, 1844, with Reference to the Presidential Election of that Year.

ing duties, and that we should exercise whatever of forecast and sagacity we possess, in endeavoring to discern what is, or what may be, yet before us.

On the 3d of March next, fifty-six years will have expired since we began our national character and existence under the present Constitution of the United States. In the lapse of that period, we have gone through fourteen Presidential elections, and have chosen eight-and-twenty successive Congresses of the United States. Of these fourteen Presidential elections, twelve have been effected by the popular vote, according to the provisions of the Constitution; and two have taken place, in pursuance of other constitutional provisions, by the House of Representatives in Congress, and in default of an election in the primary mode by the people of the Union. These several elections have all been legal and regular. Every successive incumbent of the Presidential office has been acknowledged, in succession, to be rightfully in possession of that office. All these elections have been conducted without violence or disorder, without the interference of an armed force, and by the regular, peaceable, constitutional exertion of the public will.

In my estimation, Gentlemen, this is a fact of the highest importance to us, and of great interest and importance to the whole civilized world; because it proves that a republican government is capable of existing over a great country, of various interests, connections, associations, and pursuits; that it has a possible permanence; that it may be continued and exercise its functions. For such a government has existed, has continued itself, has exercised its functions, as I have said, for more than half a century; and that half-century, be it always remembered, has been a marked period in history, — for during its progress fierce wars have afflicted the nations of Europe, and revolutions, without parallel for convulsion and violence, have shaken the dynasties of the elder world.

It is true, therefore, that on a great area there has existed, during this period, a republican and popular form of government. Its officers have been renewed during this period, by the choice of the people, and the succession of power has been as peaceable and regular as in any of the established monarchies or dynasties of the ancient world.

In the second place, our history proves, that not only is such

a republican government capable of continuance, and, as we hope, of perpetuity, but it is capable also of exercising all the functions and all the powers necessary to an efficient government, and of performing all the duties requisite to the protection and defence of the country, and to the advancement of the prosperity of the people.

In the third place, our history shows, that the government established by this Constitution, though spread over a vast territory, when administered by wise and good men, and supported by a virtuous community, is in its tendency a salutary government; that its general tendency is to act for the good of the people; and that, therefore, as parental and guardian in its character, as exercising its functions for the common weal, it attaches to itself a sentiment of general support and approbation.

And finally, our history proves that such a system may exist, with all the necessary attributes of government, with all the powers of salutary administration; and exist, at the same time, with the perfect safety of popular liberty and of private rights; — because, in this respect, looking back over the half-century which has passed, we may somewhat proudly challenge the world, including the most advanced and enlightened nations of Europe, to show that there is anywhere on the face of the earth a government which provides greater security for private right, for life and property, and greater security for popular, public liberty, than have been maintained in these United States.

Now, as I have said, it appears to me, that, in reviewing the past, we may congratulate ourselves that we have set this great example, not only to our posterity, but to the whole civilized world, — an example which the world has desired to see, which all the lovers of civil liberty and all who are friendly to popular government have anxiously sought to behold.

You know, fellow-citizens, that it has been a current opinion with those who speculate upon the subject, that republican forms of government are adapted only to the affairs of small countries. A distinguished English philosopher, writing some sixty or seventy years ago, observed that the truth of this opinion was about to be brought to the test of experiment; and that this great experiment was to be made in America. If that distinguished writer had lived to the present time, if he had reviewed with us the occurrences and incidents of the last fifty years, if he

could be here to-day and see with what order and quiet and intelligence great public questions are discussed by the great body of the people, he would have said, and he would have rejoiced to be able to say, that the great experiment had succeeded in America.

Now, Gentlemen, there are two propositions which it is my purpose to submit to you, and in support of which I shall offer such remarks as I may be able to make, and you may be able to hear, in the vast concourse assembled on this occasion.

The first is, that, if this government, under which we shall have lived fifty-six years on the third day of March next, has fully and fairly, to the satisfaction of all men, and to the admiration of the world, fulfilled the objects designed by it, then it is our interest, if we value our happiness or the happiness of those who are to come after us, *to support* that constitution and government.

And, in the second place, if the success of this Constitution, for the period I have mentioned, be fairly referable to the adoption and practice of any great system of measures, which we can comprehend, which we can understand, of which we have had experience, then I say, if we love the Constitution, and if we mean to defend and transmit it to our children, our plain duty is, as far as in us lies, to pursue the same system of public measures, and to *adhere* to all, and each, and every one, of those great principles.

The question then, is, Gentlemen, Has the Constitution of the United States fulfilled the objects for which it was established?

To the intelligible understanding of this question, and the rendering a satisfactory answer, we must first look back to the period of its adoption, and ascertain what were its objects. To what great end, for what significant and especial purpose, did our fathers adopt the Constitution of the general government?

Now, Gentlemen, however commonplace it may be, it is vastly important that we should never fail, on these occasions, to bear in mind the condition of the country while it yet consisted of individual States, united only by the loose bands of the old confederacy. The Revolutionary war, and its termination, by the peace of 1783, made the thirteen States independent States; but it left them with feeble powers, conferred for certain purposes, and to be exercised under certain conditions. They formed one government to no purpose, and with no object. They had no com-

mon revenue, no common commerce, no common nationality. A man could call himself a citizen of New York, a citizen of Massachusetts, a citizen of Georgia; but no man with any emphasis, and certainly not in any particular which makes us proud so to call ourselves, could call himself, anywhere on the face of the earth, an *American* citizen; because there was no unity, no identity, no specific idea, attached to that term, now so glorious throughout the habitable world.

The war left the States embarrassed, with a disordered trade, with every variety of custom-house regulation, and involved in debt. The country called for a general Congress. The debts of the Revolution pressed heavily upon it. All the States were indebted, all were overwhelmed with a depreciated paper money; there was no unity of action, no general concert, in short, no "perfect union" among the States. Especially did this variety exist in reference to the intercourse which each State had with its neighbors and with foreign states. It constituted not only variety, but contradiction. There was a state of things in this respect which Mr. Madison, with his clear perception and patriotic regard for the best interests of the American people, did not hesitate to call a "wonderful anarchy of trade."

It was under these circumstances that the formation of the Constitution of the United States entered into the conception and purposes of the wise men of those days. They entertained that conception; they sought to accomplish that purpose. This was no easy purpose to accomplish with thirteen independent States, each jealous of its liberties and its rights, and sufficiently prone to think highly of its local advantages and powers. Yet the wisdom and patriotism, and general devotion to the interests of the whole, felt everywhere, pervading all classes, in the end accomplished that object of almost supreme importance.

Let us now look a little more closely into this matter, and inquire something more definitely into the objects for which the Constitution was formed. It was, for certain purposes, to make us *one people*, though surely not for all purposes; and the extent to which it was desired and designed that the people of all the States should be one people, and the government over these people should be one government, is expressed in a document of the most authentic character, I mean the letter addressed to the Congress of the Confederation by the Convention which formed

the Constitution. That letter, written on behalf of the Convention, and having the great name of Washington subscribed to it, says:—

"The friends of our country have long seen and desired, that the power of making war, peace, and treaties, that of levying money and regulating commerce, and the correspondent executive and judicial authorities, should be fully and effectually vested in the general government of the Union."

We see here, then, that the object of this Constitution was to make the people of the United States one people, and to place them under one government, in regard to every thing respecting their relation to foreign states and the aspect in which the nations of the world were to regard them. It was not an amalgamation of the whole people under one government; not an extinguishment of the State sovereignties. That would have been an extinction, not a union, of existing States. There was no pressing necessity, therefore, for making the local institutions of the several States approach each other in any closer affinity. As governments existed, each within its own territory, for all purposes of territorial supremacy and power, in a word, for all State purposes, it was no matter what variety the States should have in these respects, and it was left to their own discretion. And it is the very beauty of our system, as I conceive, that the Federal and the State governments are kept thus distinct; that local legislation is left to the local authorities, and the general legislation is given to the general government.

This I take to be the true idea and definition of those purposes for which the general government, under the present Constitution, was organized and established. Indeed, Gentlemen, a most authoritative, a perfectly authoritative, declaration of the objects of the people of the United States in forming a Constitution, is contained in that instrument itself, on its very face. There the words stand, an everlasting record of the intentions and purposes of those who framed it. It says it is established "in order to form a more perfect union." They, the people, framed the Constitution of the United States, for their "more perfect union," — to "establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, and promote the general welfare," and, finally, "to secure the blessings of liberty" to them

and their posterity. Here, at the head of all these objects, stands, in bold and prominent relief, the great, noble object, TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION *among the people of the United States.*

And I will take the liberty to refer to another passage in the letter to which I have just alluded, from the Federal Convention to Congress, in submitting to them the plan of the Constitution: —

"In all our deliberations on this subject, we kept steadily in our view that which appears to us the *greatest* interest of every true American, the consolidation of our UNION, in which is involved our prosperity, felicity, safety, perhaps our national existence."

You will please to observe, that this language is not applied to the powers of government; it does not say that they aim at consolidation *in* the general government, nor *of* all the powers of government; it does not at all usurp the local authorities of the States, nor interfere with any thing that belongs to the local legislation and administration. But the consolidation of which Washington and his associates spoke was a consolidation *of the Union*, for the just purposes of a Union, of a strong Union, — for those purposes for which the Union itself ought to exist.

I have said, and I beg leave to repeat, because it lies at the foundation of all just conceptions of the Constitution of the country, that the Union created by the Constitution was a union among the people in every thing which regards their diplomatic and foreign relations and concerns, and the intercourse between the world and themselves. The Union created by the old Confederation was imperfect; indeed, it hardly existed at all, certainly with no efficiency and productive of no good. This was the object, as stated by the members of the Convention themselves, in the document to which I have referred, and distinctly announced on the face of the Constitution itself.

In pursuance of these purposes, the Constitution proceeded to institute a general government, with such powers and authority as would accomplish the object intended. The Constitution assigned to the general government the power of war and peace, the power of making treaties, and that other important, and, as it has turned out, absolutely indispensable power, *the regulation of commerce.*

Government has attempted to perform all these duties. It

has exercised the power of regulating commerce. So has it sought to establish justice, another of its objects. It has done so especially in the great matter of paying off the debt of the Revolution. It has enacted laws to insure domestic tranquillity, and it has effected that object. It has provided for the common defence, by organizing armies, equipping navies, and such other preparations as the exigencies of our position have rendered necessary. In these and other ways it has endeavored to promote the public welfare; and it has not neglected any means for securing the blessings of liberty.

Such being the objects of the Constitution, you and I and our contemporaries throughout the country, who have a part to act, a vote to give, an opinion to express, — you and I, and all of us, after the experience of half a century, are bound to put it to ourselves and to our consciences, whether these objects have been accomplished by that instrument. Because if they have not, if the Constitution has shown itself, under the best administrations, inefficient and useless, it is time to revert to that great power inherent in the people, of reforming the government, and establishing a system more suited to their purposes and desires. But if the Constitution, on the whole, upon this conscientious examination, shall prove to have accomplished its ends, to have subserved the public prosperity, carried the nation forward in wealth, in business, in enterprise, and to have raised us to a pitch of glory and renown, of which you and I and all of us are proud, — then, I say, we are bound to it by every tie of gratitude, by every feeling of patriotism. We are bound to support it with all our hearts, for all our lives, and to transmit it unimpaired to our children.

Now, I say, in my humble but conscientious judgment, and I say it under a mixed sense of gratitude to God and of profound reverence for the wisdom of our ancestors, making all reasonable allowances for the frailties which beset all men and the misfortunes which sometimes betide all governments, — I say to you as my judgment, I say it to the country, and would to Heaven I could say it to the whole human race, and in tones which would echo to the last generation of men, that this Constitution *has* prosperously, greatly, and gloriously answered the ends of its establishment. And if there be any one among you, or if there be in the country a man, who doubts or denies this, he

is a man for whose judgment I have no great respect, and with whose feelings I have no manner of sympathy.

Gentlemen, this government was established at one of the most fearful periods in the history of the human race in modern times, — just at the breaking out of that tremendous convulsion which so terribly shook Europe to her foundation, in all her interests and all her concerns, all her thrones and all her dynasties, — the French Revolution. We had just entered upon the first administration of the government under the great leader of the Revolution, who had been chosen to be our great leader in the times which succeeded, the times of peace. When the French Revolution broke out, we had just commenced our national being under the present Constitution. It proved the ark of our safety. It proved competent to preserve our neutrality. It proved competent, under his administration, to keep us clear from the overwhelming and submerging Maelstrom of European war and European conquest. In its progress it covered every sea with our flag. It replenished the treasury. It paid the debt of the Revolution. Above all, it gave us name and fame, it gave us character and standing. It made the flag *E Pluribus Unum* known wherever any thing could be water-borne. In the northern and southern, the eastern and western seas, wherever our navy went, the stars and stripes went with it, and they made known that the United States of America had become *one* in all that related to their intercourse with foreign nations. It gave a general significance, a new respect, to the power-importing name of America: and on that foundation we still rest.

Under this Constitution we have attained the rank of the second commercial nation in the world. We have risen from a population of three millions to one of twenty millions. Every interest, in my judgment, has been successfully maintained, sustained, cherished, and nourished by a wise and paternal government.

And now, Gentlemen, is there a man among you, or in the country, who, in a just and candid examination of this history, is not ready to stand by the Constitution? or are there those who prefer another form of government? I put it to you to-day, whether, in the history of the past, which we have briefly scanned, you see any thing which you wish reversed. Do you

wish to revolutionize the history of the past? Do you wish to blot it out? Is there any thing in the history of your country thus far which makes you ashamed that you are Americans? I put it to the elderly men assembled here to-day, whose career of life is fast drawing to a close, — do they know any better government, any better political system, to which they would wish to intrust the lives and property of their children? I put it to you, men in middle life, engaged in the concerns and business of life, — do you wish for, can you conceive, have you a notion of, any system better calculated to secure industry, to maintain liberty, to protect property, and to enable you to provide for yourselves and for those who are near and dear to you? And you, young men, full of the aspirations of ingenuous youth, full, I know, of patriotic feeling, and eagerly desirous to enjoy, to honor, and to serve your country, — do you wish to render public service under any other banner?

Then, Gentlemen, then, fellow-Americans, then, friends, if it be true that the Constitution of the United States, under the various and successive administrations that have taken place since 1789, has fulfilled all the just hopes, and more than even the most sanguine hopes, of the country, is there a question that it is the part of gratitude to God, of respect to our ancestors, the part of regard for every interest that is dear to us and to ours, to cleave to it as to the ark of our political salvation? that, however it may be with others, however others may stray from the great object of national regard, for us and ours we will *adhere* to it, we will maintain, we will defend it, to our dying day?

If this be so, if the Constitution of the country has been, in fact, proved eminently useful, the next question is, Upon what system of general policy, according to what measures relating to the great interests of the country, has the Constitution, on the whole, been administered? How did it commence? What measures were deemed necessary, if I may so say, from its cradle?

Gentlemen, this leads us back to that interesting and important epoch, the commencement of Washington's administration, in the city of New York, under the present Constitution of the United States.

For myself, I always revisit those scenes with delight. I refresh myself by going back to this spring-time of the republic,

to contemplate the characters of the men, and, above all, to admire the purity of their patriotism and the elevation of their principles. In idea I love to gather round me the circle of Washington and his great compatriots, not in the field of battle, but in a greater field, the field of political wisdom, the field of patriotism, the field where prudence, and discretion, and firmness are as necessary as in the greatest conflict in arms. I carry myself back to the halls of the Congress which sat in the spring of 1789. I can present to myself a sort of living image of that great assembly of wise men. In the centre you may see Washington himself, and his immediate advisers, — Mr. Jay, who had not yet ceased to be Secretary for Foreign Affairs under the authority of the old Confederation, Mr. Hamilton, and General Knox. In the House of Representatives were Ames, and Goodhue, and Benson, and Lawrence, and Boudinot, and Fitzsimmons, and Madison, and Huger. In the Senate were King, and Schuyler, and Strong, and Robert Morris, and Baldwin of Georgia, and Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, — he who had moved the resolution of Independence in 1776 then in the Senate, and he* who had proved himself the champion in debate of that resolution then presiding over the Senate. In one department or another were the warriors of many a well-fought field; and civilians and statesmen, who had been tried in the fiery ordeal of the Revolution, and come forth like burnished gold, surrounded the great chief of the government.

Gentlemen, I can realize the scene when General Washington assembled these houses of the legislature before him, and made to them his first speech, and paid to them the tribute due to their character, and laid before them and before the country those great principles of public and private virtue, on which he wished and desired to see the administration of the government established.

"It will be more consistent," he says, "with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actuate me, to substitute, in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute that is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism which adorn the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honorable qualifications I behold the surest pledges, that as, on one side, no local preju-

* John Adams, Vice-President of the United States.

dices or attachments, no separate views or party animosities, will misdirect the comprehensive and equal eye which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests; so, on another, that the foundations of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality, and the preëminence of a free government be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens and command the respect of the world; since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered as *deeply*, perhaps as *finally*, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people."

And in this sentiment, Gentlemen, uttered by Washington, I concur with all my heart. I believe that we have this great pledge in our hands; and I believe that every lover of liberty in the whole earth is looking steadily and earnestly to see if this great model of a republican government may be held up to the imitation of mankind.

This is the scene in which our government commenced. These were the auspices under which it began; worthy, in my judgment, of America, worthy of liberty, worthy of everlasting renown!

But now, Gentlemen, that we have turned back and contemplated this great first meeting of the chief magistrate and legislature under the Constitution, the inquiry is, What system of administration did they adopt? What measures appeared to them to be consonant with the objects of the Constitution, and called for by the general voice of the people? And I wish to put the question at once, without any preliminary remarks, and I put it not only to the Whigs of this assembly, but, if there is any gentleman present who has attachments to the other party, or if there be any such in the country who may hear my words, I put it to him, to his conscience, to his love of truth, to say whether the great measures with which the administration of that day proposed to carry on the government are such as our opponents hold out for our adoption at this day? Did General Washington and his Congress begin by denying entirely all power to foster the labor and industry of the United States, as a power forbidden by the Constitution? Did they deny that Congress has any power over the currency? Did they deny that Congress has power to adopt suitable means to collect and disburse its

revenue? Did they begin by denying to Congress the right to make, from the treasury, improvements which were absolutely necessary for the convenience and facility of commerce? Did they, in short, enter upon the administration with the notion that, after all that was done, after all the measures adopted to make a more united people, there still remained in the States a power of State interference, by which one State could set up its will against the wishes of all the other States, and so defeat the operations of the general government? An administration upon these principles, or any of these principles, would defeat the whole object of forming a more perfect union among the people; it would make the bands of the confederacy as loose as before the adoption of the Constitution; it would have untied, instead of tying closer, the knots of concord and union.

Now, in the early administration of the government some trusts and duties were conferred upon the general government, about which there could not be much dispute. It belonged to the general government to make war and peace, and to make treaties. There was no room for dispute as to these powers; they were liable to no great diversity of opinion. But then comes the other power, which has been, and is now, of the utmost importance, that *of regulating commerce.* What does that import? On this part of the Constitution there has sprung up in our day a great diversity of opinion. But it is certain that when the Constitution had been framed, and the first Congress assembled to pass laws under it, there was no diversity of opinion upon it, no contradictory sentiments. The power of regulating commerce granted to Congress was most assuredly understood to embrace all forms of regulation belonging to those terms under other governments,—all the meaning implied in the terms, in the same language, employed in all laws and in the intercourse of modern nations. And I consider it as capable of mathematical demonstration, as capable of demonstration as any proposition in Euclid, that the power of discriminating in custom-house duties, for the protection of American labor and industry, was understood, not by some, but by all, by high and low, everywhere, as included in the regulation of trade.

The term was well understood in our colonial history, and if we go back to the history of the Constitution, and of the Con-

vention which adopted it, we shall find that everywhere, when masses of men were assembled, and the wants of the people were brought forth into prominence, the idea was held up, that domestic industry could not prosper, manufactures and the mechanic arts could not advance, the condition of the common country could not be carried up to any considerable elevation, unless there should be one government, to lay one rate of duty upon imports throughout the Union, from New Hampshire to Georgia; regard to be had, in laying this duty, to the protection of American labor and industry. I defy the man in any degree conversant with history, in any degree acquainted with the annals of this country from 1787 to the adoption of the Constitution in 1789, to say that this was not a leading, I may almost say, the leading motive, South as well as North, for the formation of the new government. Without that provision in the Constitution, it never could have been adopted.

I shall add one or two circumstances which occurred immediately on organizing the government, to show that this was the expectation, the belief, the conviction of what was the duty, and what would be the conduct, of the new government, which prevailed everywhere.

The House of Representatives formed a quorum for the first time under the Constitution, in the city of New York, and elected its speaker, on the 1st day of April, 1789. And now, Gentlemen, the House being thus organized, what do you imagine was the very first petition ever presented to it? I hold an account of that petition in my hand, copied from the Journal of the House; and here it is: —

"A petition of the tradesmen, manufacturers, and others, of Maryland, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House, and read, stating certain matters, and praying an imposition of such duties on all foreign articles which can be made in America, as will give a just and decided preference to the labors of the petitioners, and that there may be granted to them, in common with the other manufacturers and mechanics of the United States, such relief as in the wisdom of Congress may appear proper."

There, Gentlemen, was the very first petition ever presented to the Congress of the United States, and it came from the monumental city, the capital of Maryland!

And now what do you suppose was the second petition?

Why, it was a like petition from certain mechanics of Charleston; — not Charlestown in Massachusetts, that Commonwealth now scoffed at and derided as narrow and selfish in her politics; not that Charlestown which was burned and laid in ashes by a foreign foe on the 17th of June, 1775, but which, under a fostering government, sprung up again like another phœnix, with renovated and increased beauty; not that Charlestown which skirts the base of Bunker Hill; — but Charleston, the refined and elegant city, the pride of the South, Charleston in South Carolina, always distinguished for intelligence, hospitality, and all the social virtues; Charleston, the mention of which always brings up by association the names of Pinckney, of Sumpter, of Huger, and of Lowndes. From the bosom of that Charleston came this second petition to Congress; and it was a petition of the *shipwrights* of that city, praying Congress to protect them against foreign competition. Here it is: —

"A petition of the shipwrights of the city of Charleston, in the State of South Carolina, was presented to the House and read, stating the distress they are in, from the decline of that branch of business and the present situation of the trade of the United States, and praying that the wisdom and policy of the national legislature may be directed to such measures, in a general regulation of trade and the establishment of a proper navigation act, as will tend to relieve the particular distresses of the petitioners, and, in common with them, those of their fellow-shipwrights throughout the United States."

Well, Gentlemen, and where did the next petition on this subject come from? What city, what people, what country, whose inhabitants, followed close upon these petitions and made similar applications to Congress? It was from the mechanics and manufacturers of that city which is now the great commercial emporium of the whole western continent, the city of New York. Let us see in what terms they address themselves to what they justly call "the *new* government," and what hopes inspired their bosoms, from the fact that a new government had been formed on which was bestowed the power of protecting mechanical labor. Here is the petition: —

"A petition of the mechanics and manufacturers of the city of New York, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read, setting forth that, in the present deplorable state of commerce and manufactures, they look with confidence to the operations

of the new government for a restoration of both, and that relief which they have so long and anxiously desired; that they have subjoined a list of such articles as can be manufactured in the State of New York, and humbly pray the countenance and attention of the national legislature thereto."

And yet, Gentlemen, in that great and noble city, which has so far gone ahead of all its competitors, and presents itself to the world as the great city of the American continent, abounding in commerce and successful manufactures, rich in all things, the products of industry of all countries, there are persons in that very city, from which this earnest application of the manufacturers and mechanics was addressed to Congress, in the first days of its existence, who *deny all power* to Congress thus to relieve their fellow-citizens!

Lamentable, lamentable indeed, in my judgment, is that great departure (by what causes produced I will not say), that wide departure of public opinion from the plain, clear, and rational wishes of the people, in the formation of the government, as expressed in these memorials.

Now, I ask you again, how were these petitions for protection treated? Did Congress deny its power? Did it say that it could not possibly give them this protection, unless it should happen to be *in-ci-den-tal?* Did it say, We have only a *revenue* power in regard to this matter? that is, We have the clear and undoubted power to take so much money out of your pockets, and apply it to our own purposes; but God forbid that, in doing so, we should do you any good at the same time? Were these petitioners told that they must take care of themselves? that these were days of free trade, and every body must have a right to trade on equal terms with every body else? Far, far from it. In regard to the subject of these petitions, we all know that the very first Congress secured to the navigation of the United States that which has been, from that time to this, the great foundation, not only of preference, but of *monopoly*, the whole coasting trade of the Union; and the shipwrights of America enjoy that monopoly to the present day, and I hope they will enjoy it for ever. Look at the coasting trade of the United States, so vast in its extent. It is entirely confined to American shipping. But why thus confine it? Why not let in other ships, all other ships which wish to come in, — the Dane, the man

of the Hanse Towns and of Hamburg,—with their cheap means of navigation? Why not let them, if they wish, become carriers between New Orleans and New York and Boston? Why not, if you support the system of free trade, why not carry it out? Be impartial. We say you have no more right to protect the carrying trade than any other mode of carrying on traffic among the people; and yet the coasting trade of the United States, employing half our tonnage, is a close monopoly to American shipwrights and sailors; and so may it ever remain!

When I say that, nobody complains of it, but every body says it is right and should be so. But when we come to the government and ask them to protect the hat-maker, or boot-maker, or worker in brass, and all the various mechanic arts of the country, or the man who makes cloth on a larger scale, then is raised the outcry of "Free trade!" and "Down with protection!" And sometimes, I am very sorry to say, this cry comes from the cities, from the exchanges, though not always, and recently, thank Heaven! not often. But sometimes it does come from those people who have long enjoyed, and justly enjoyed, this monopoly of the whole coasting trade of the country, and who have been enriched, honestly enriched, by it.

But how did Congress treat these applications from the cities of New York and Baltimore, to extend protection to the mechanic arts? It *granted* them! It yielded it. And, except a formal act for taking the oaths, the very first act passed by Congress was to secure the coasting trade and protect the mechanic arts, by discriminating duties, and thus carry out the clear, and, according to historical testimony, the most manifest object of the Constitution.

Now, Gentlemen, I know I weary you with these details. But if public discussion is worth any thing, if we mean to exercise the elective franchise intelligently, it seems to me we must go back and drink deep of these original fountains of legislation and administration. I will call your attention, then, to the history of the first act ever passed by Congress, except the one concerning oaths. The following is the preamble of that act: —"Whereas it is necessary for the support of government, for the discharge of the debts of the United States, and the encouragement and *protection of manufactures*, that duties be laid on

goods, wares, and merchandise imported." Ay, the very term on the face of the act is that derided and now much abhorred word, *Protection*. There it is on the parchment record of Congress, and on the paper record of our statute-books. It cannot be erased, and it shall not be erased!

Now, Gentlemen, Congress, as I have mentioned, assembled, and the House of Representatives formed a quorum on the first day of April, 1789. It was just before the spring importations; the treasury was empty, the debt unprovided for; there was not money enough on hand to pay the expenses of members of Congress. Mr. Madison, who took a great and admirable lead in the public business of the day, introduced a measure into Congress to lay the necessary imposts. In the emergency of the moment he proposed, not a discriminating law, laying specific duties for protection as well as for revenue, but a general law, laying a general average duty, so much per cent. on all articles. He said the principle must be regarded. The general rule was doubtless that of free trade, but we have the example of protection, and it must be followed until all other countries adopt free trade. He urged upon Congress the passage of a law to raise a little money, without going into the imposition of specific discriminating duties, article by article. He urged it with his accustomed power, ability, and authority, and no man in the house had equal authority.

But the House of Representatives steadily and sturdily, finally and to the end, refused any such course of proceeding. They said, "No! we will begin, on this subject of laying duties on imports, as we intend to go on. Here, and to-day, we will take up the list of goods, article by article, as requested in the New York petition, and on some we will lay lighter, and on some we will lay heavier duties; we will discriminate, and we will make this discrimination with a view, while answering the wants of the treasury, to protect the industry and answer the expectations of our own people." To this principle they adhered, and voted down Mr. Madison's proposition. Mr. Madison himself, who never denied the principle, came into the measure, and put his great talents at work upon the bill, and it passed the house, and stands now upon the statute-book, bearing upon its face, as one of its objects, the protection of American industry, and adopting the true and lawful, and only true and just discrimination, that of specific duties.

Let me add, that at this time it was no local question. The North was not one way upon it and the South another; it was supported by the South as well as the North. A gentleman from Virginia insisted that *coal* ought to be protected. A gentleman from South Carolina said that there were rice-fields in that State beyond what were wanted, and that they were adapted to the raising of hemp, which was needed in other parts of the country. It could not be raised, however, he said, because it was not protected, and therefore he was for protecting hemp. And, what may be remarked as an incident showing the great progress of the South in that product, a gentleman (Mr. Moore) of South Carolina said, that, if American planters could be protected, *he did not know but they might one day raise cotton* in South Carolina, provided they could get good seed! That was as recently as 1789, before which time scarce any cotton was exported.

This sentiment, Gentlemen, continued to prevail through all the administrations which followed General Washington. It was regarded by Mr. Jefferson as a just principle of legislation, as he stated at the beginning of his administration, in 1802, and still more distinctly just before the expiration of his term of office, in 1808. I need not say, what every body knows, that Mr. Madison, in 1810, 1812, and 1816, reiterated all these sentiments.

This is the history of the country on the great question of protection. I speak of the *fact*, and assert it as an historical truth, proved from the journals of Congress, the messages of the Presidents, the acts of legislation, beginning with the second law ever passed, and running through successive administrations, that it was held as the undoubted right of Congress, and no more the right than the duty, by just discrimination, *to protect the labor of the American people.*

There are other topics which I shall pass over at this time. It is now denied that Congress has power over the currency. So Washington did not think. So Madison did not think. It is denied that Congress has any power to facilitate commerce by internal improvements. This demands a single remark. You know that, by the Constitution of the United States, all power of laying duties on articles imported was exclusively granted to Congress Before the adoption of the Constitution, it belonged

to every State; New York could lay duties, and so could Massachusetts and Rhode Island. By the adoption of that instrument, the States were expressly prohibited from laying these duties. The rivers and bays, and all the facilities of commerce which existed naturally, or had then been constructed by the States, were surrendered to the general government. The general government came in and used all the harbors, wharves, piers, together with the few light-houses which had been erected on the coast, and, what was much more important, took possession from that day of all the imposts collected at the custom-houses. At that time it was supposed, as the whole commerce of the country was referred to Congress, as its regulation devolved upon Congress, as its receipts went into the hands of Congress, that, as a matter of certainty, whenever the commerce of the country required expenditures to facilitate it, Congress, which had all the money, and not the States, which had no part of the money, would contribute to pay the expense of such facilities.

I have always entertained the opinion, that, so far as commercial facilities are concerned, the power does belong to Congress, and that it ought to be exercised. It is not local; and may be as properly exercised on the lakes and rivers of the West and Northwest as anywhere else. I remember that, fifteen years ago, while it was admitted that improvements on the Atlantic coast were constitutional, it was denied that Congress could go to the Mississippi and lay out money for similar improvements there. That is certainly a strange doctrine, a strange interpretation of the Constitution. I suppose we all stand on the same ground; we are all members of the same family. Latterly, the reverse of that doctrine seems to prevail. We learn that it is constitutional to clear out the snags of the Mississippi and to build up the harbors on the shores of the great lakes; but not at all constitutional to remove a bar from the great river in a great State of the old thirteen, the State of New York, though she is no more directly interested in it than any other State of the Union which has occasion to navigate her waters for commercial purposes. This is a new version of the Constitution, and one, I must say, quite unsatisfactory to me.

I happen to know that, as soon as the Constitution of the United States was adopted, and this power was devolved upon

the general government, General Washington addressed a letter to the port wardens of the city of New York, telling them that, of course, the support of the light-houses, &c., would devolve upon Congress; but as Congress had then no money, and no provision had been made, he requested them not to extinguish the lights, to hold up their lanterns, and pledged himself that he would see them refunded out of the national treasury. And he did so. But now it is supposed to be a great heresy to call upon the national treasury for one cent to clear a harbor, to remove a sand-bar, or to facilitate the commerce of the country in any respect.

These local ideas mislead. Some years ago, while I had the honor of a seat in Congress, I voted for a large expenditure for a harbor at Mobile. A constituent of mine wrote to me to know how, as a Massachusetts man, I could make up my mind to vote so large a sum for a local improvement so far away as a harbor at Mobile, on the Gulf of Mexico. I told him I would not answer him on the general principle, but I would give him a very satisfactory matter-of-fact answer: two or three of *his neighbors* had suffered shipwreck on that very bar at Mobile, in their own vessels, from Massachusetts.

Gentlemen, I will occupy your attention no longer with the other novelties of these times. I hope that they are sufficiently exploded with the generality of American citizens, at least the idea that the laws of Congress can be set aside by individual States. If allowed to prevail, we are no longer *one* people, — only, at any rate, so long as all the States of the present Union choose to remain so. If one State goes off, we are two people; if nine go off, we are ten. It is sufficient to say, that if that idea is allowed to prevail, the Constitution becomes a mere rope of sand; it will grow feebler and feebler every day, and will become, ere long, the object of all men's derision and of all men's contempt.

And now, fellow-citizens, having stated to you what I conscientiously believe to be, and what is proved to be, the real system, the true policy, and the measures by which the government has been administered since most of us were born, I put it to you to-day, whether it is your pleasure to reverse all this course of administration, to entertain the doctrines now presented by our opponents, who deny the power of Congress over pro-

tection, over the currency, and over internal improvements, and when they assert any thing, assert only the power of nullification.

I desire, however, to consider their principles with all candor and fairness. And our opponents tell us, in the first place, that they are not all nullifiers. I am glad of it. But who are the leaders? Who speak for them? Whose standard do they follow? Whose words do they echo? Whose sympathy and support do they seek? That 's the question. A party speaks through its organs, its leaders. What folly it is to say, "That 's not *my* opinion." Suppose it is not: your influence goes to maintain it, and it is idle to profess that the party goes farther than you wish to go, if all the time you contribute your power to sustain them. You must not give them the power, if you do not mean to have it exercised.

And so it is said, that all are not against protection. Who are not against it? Or if any are not against it, do they not follow the lead of those who are? Justice requires us to say, that there are those of that party in favor of protection in this and other Northern States. But those whom we feel obliged to oppose have chosen a leader; they have presented to us a candidate for our support. How is he on the subject of protection? In other words, what is Mr. Polk's opinion of the subject? Mr. Polk says he is in favor of a judicious tariff. But what sort of a tariff is a judicious tariff in his opinion? His brethren of Carolina say it is a *horizontal* tariff, one which makes no discriminations, but rejects all protection. That is the judgment of Mr. Polk's Carolinian friends on a judicious tariff; and I am strongly of the opinion that it is *his* judgment also.

Again, he says he is in favor of "*incidental* protection." What is incidental protection? Does it mean accidental, casual? I suppose, if a duty of ten per cent. was imposed upon all articles without any discrimination whatever, it would accidentally give some such incidental protection. If that is the meaning of incidental protection, I eschew the word altogether. No, no. The true principle is this. You lay a duty to raise a necessary amount of revenue; in laying it you discriminate, not accidentally, but studiously, cautiously, designedly, discreetly; and in raising a dollar of revenue, you consider upon what article you can collect that dollar so as best to advance the industry of the

nation. That 's the question, and that 's all of it. If you look *only* to the revenue in laying the duty, and say you are in favor of the protection which *that* duty will incidentally allow, you may as well say you are in favor of a rain, or a fog, or a thunder-storm. You are in favor of an accident. It is something which you cannot control. It will take place against your volition, or without it; whether you are in favor of it or not. This, certainly, is not a statesmanlike view of the subject.

The great principle is this. One of you has to contribute five dollars a year to maintain the government; and you pay it in the form of duties on what you consume. Now, if you happen to be a consumer mainly, it is of very little consequence to you on what particular articles this duty is imposed. But it makes the greatest difference in the world to your neighbor, whether it is laid on such articles as he produces, or whether it is so laid as to keep him down and subservient to the labor of other countries. I say again, there must be an intended, designed, discreet discrimination, for real, efficient, substantial protection; and the man who is not for that, is for nothing but incidents, and accidents, and casualties.

We hear much of reciprocity, and I take the rule upon this subject to be well laid down by a distinguished gentleman from another section of the United States,* whom you will probably have the pleasure of hearing when I shall have relieved your patience, that reciprocity is a matter to be secured with foreign nations when it is evidently a true reciprocity. But I have yet to learn, from some new dictionary, that a system of reciprocity is a system with advantages only on one side. I am for reciprocity treaties. No, I will not say treaties, but arrangements; for the whole power over the subject lies with Congress, and not with the treaty-making power. But I am for a *real* reciprocity; not such as was provided by the treaty arrangement lately negotiated, and which the Senate, greatly to their honor, in my judgment, rejected.† I am not for giving away substantial rights, and, without ascribing blame to any party, I must say, not that we were overreached, but that the arrangement of this kind, commonly called Mr. McLane's arrangement of 1831, has turned out greatly to our disadvantage,

* Hon. Mr. Berrien, of Georgia.
† A Treaty with the Hanse Towns.

and that all our reciprocity treaties, as they are called, with the North of Europe, have been, and are, manifestly injurious to American navigation. It will, in my judgment, be one of the first duties of the new administration (if we get one), to revise the whole of that matter, to take care that we protect ourselves and not to rely on the good-will of our national competitors.

Now, Gentlemen, having detained you so long on the history of the government, to show that protection has been one of its objects from the beginning, I will consider for a moment the reasons, the theory of the matter. Why is protection to domestic labor useful and necessary to the country? It comes to this. We have a variety of occupations, and allow me to say that this variety of employments is a matter of great importance to society, for it gives scope to every degree of ingenuity and talent. I admit freely, notwithstanding the multitude of avocations in life, that the culture of the soil is the great leading interest of the country. I admit this freely, and am willing, if you choose, that trade and manufactures should be regarded as subordinate, as auxiliary to it. I am willing to admit, that, if the theory and practice of protection can be shown distinctly and clearly to militate against the great agricultural interest of the country, it ought to be given up.

But consider the matter; take even this only, the fact that in this country wages are high. They are, and they ought to be, higher than in any other country in the world. And the reason is, that the laborers of this country *are* the country. The vast proportion of those who own the soil, especially in the Northern States, cultivate the soil. They stand on their own acres. The proprietors are the tillers, the laborers on the soil. But this is not all. The members of the country here are part and parcel of the government, and every man is one of the sovereign people, whose combined will constitutes the government. This is a state of things which exists nowhere else on the face of the earth. An approximation to it has been made in France, since the revolution of 1831, which secured the abolition of primogeniture and the restraint of devises.

But nowhere else in the world does there exist such a state of things as we see here, where the proprietors are the laborers, and, at the same time, help to frame the government. If, therefore, we wish to maintain the government, we must see that labor with us is not put in competition with the pauper, un-

taught, ignorant labor of Europe. Our men who labor have families to maintain and to educate. They have sons to fit for the discharge of most duties of life; they have an intelligent part to act for themselves and their connections. And is labor like that to be reduced to a level with that of the forty millions of serfs of Russia, or the half-fed, half-clothed, ignorant, dependent laborers of other parts of Europe? America must cease then to be America. We should be transferred to I know not what sort of government, transferred to I know not what state of society, if the laborers in the United States were to do no more to maintain and educate their families, and to provide for old age, than they do in the Old World. And may my eyes never look upon such a spectacle as that in this free country!

I believe, that, so far from injuring the great interest of the cultivation of the soil, the reasonable protection of manufactures is useful to that department of industry in all its branches. I believe, in the first place, that the protection of manufactures is useful to the planting States themselves, though I know most of those engaged in that pursuit are of a contrary opinion. I believe the planter of South Carolina is better off than if there were no manufacturers of his staple in the United States. These take a considerable proportion of every crop of his cotton. They take it early, they fix a price, they are near customers, and to them he disposes of no small portion of his annual crop.

Again, I believe the establishment and successful prosecution of manufactures at the North materially diminishes the price of those articles which the Southern planter has to buy. But a gentleman from the South, already alluded to, is present, to whom I will leave these matters, and speak of something nearer home, the great farming interests of the Middle and Western States.

Now I hold it to be as demonstrable as any moral proposition, that the agricultural interest of this State, and of the adjoining Western and Southern States, is materially, substantially, and beyond measure benefited by the existence of the manufactures of the North. To elucidate this, allow me to inquire what is it that the farmer of the county of Albany, or Duchess, or Rensselaer, desires? Next to the favor of Heaven, in showers and summer heat, and the blessing of health, he desires *a market of sale, at fair prices, for his produce*, and a mar-

ket, near and reasonable, for what he has occasion to buy. If he has a market where he can *sell* reasonably, and *buy* reasonably, these two conditions fill up the measure of his exigencies.

Where shall he go for a market of sale? I wish to put the question to those who decry the Northern and Eastern manufacturers. Where shall a farmer in any great county of New York find a market for his produce? Why, say some, abroad, in England. But England will not take it. France will not take it.

I see it is insisted, in some of the leading presses in the interest of those opposed to us, that our tariff prevents the sending of our bread stuffs to England. There is nothing more absurd, nothing more entirely destitute of all truth and fact. I assert it as my opinion, that, if our tariff were abolished to-morrow, you would not sell one bushel more corn in England than you do now. Why does not England take it now? Not because she cannot pay for it; but the laws of England prevent the importation of grain or flour, except when the price rises so high in England as to exceed a certain rate (which it seldom does), and then it comes in under a low duty.

This happens sometimes, but not often. Flour, therefore, is sent abroad to wait these occasions, but only in small quantities. You have sent a good deal of wheat to Canada, where it is ground and becomes Canadian flour. This gives a vent for some, and so far it is well. Some beef and cheese and other provisions go from New York to England, and this is all well. The more the better. But depend upon it, that nothing of this kind is affected by the tariff. The reason England takes no more is because her laws (and of their alteration I see no prospect) do not admit it, except when there is a short crop in England, and then under a reduced duty.

Now what becomes of the surplus produce of the grain-growing States? Where does it go to? Who consumes it? The great demand is at home, *at home*, in the manufacturing districts of this State and of other States, and in the consumption of the persons engaged in navigation and commerce. The home demand is the great demand, which takes off the surplus agricultural produce.

I think it sheds light upon the subject, which must satisfy reasonable minds, to look at facts. The New England States, three of them at least, do not raise their own bread-stuffs. They are consumers largely of the flour and grain of this and other

States, as well as of other articles. I have taken some pains to ascertain the amount of the products of other States consumed by Massachusetts alone. I know, in the absence of official returns, it is not easy to speak positively and certainly; but I have given some attention to the subject, and a very intelligent, accurate, and careful member of Congress from Massachusetts (Mr. Hudson) has attended to it also. The result of these estimates I wish to lay before the people of this community, and of all the States, planting States as well as others, and to show them what amount of produce is consumed in Massachusetts.

In the first place, Massachusetts takes and pays for cotton to the value of $7,000,000 annually.

And now, if you go to Boston, and look at the great depot of the Western Railroad, you will find it filled with flour; and on every road, and on the hill-sides of New Hampshire, and wherever there is water to float or steam-power to convey it, in every village and town, and at every cross-road, you will find flour bearing every brand, from the State of New York and the West; and there is where it is consumed. Massachusetts takes and pays for flour annually to the value of $4,000,000.

She takes and pays for Indian corn and other grain to the value of $4,000,000 more, the produce of New York, of the Southern, and of the Northwestern States.

Of wool, — and let the farmers of Duchess understand *that*, and the farmers of Pennsylvania, and the farmers of Vermont, and the farmers everywhere; let them understand, when the price of their wool is raised, what raised it. Massachusetts herself receives $3,000,000 worth of wool; and let the farmers get that amount, if they can, out of an *incidental* and *judicious* tariff!

Of leather and hides, from the mountains of New York mainly, Massachusetts buys every year $700,000 worth. She buys and consumes beef, pork, and other provisions to the value of $3,000,000. Of butter and cheese, mostly from New York, she buys to the value of $1,000,000. She takes $500,000 worth of pig lead from Missouri and Illinois; $300,000 worth of rice from South Carolina, for consumption; and $1,000,000 worth of tar, pitch, &c., from what they call the "Glorious Old North State."* And not to overlook Pennsylvania, she pays her annually $800,000 for iron.

* North Carolina.

Here, then, are $40,000,000 worth of products, of the raw materials of other States, paid for and consumed by Massachusetts, to say nothing of the other States. Here is a sum equal to almost half of the whole export of raw material from the United States to all Europe! And now what do Mr. Polk and the followers of Mr. Polk propose? They say to agriculturists, "Your produce is low." How do they propose to increase the prices? They say, "Your consumption is too small." They propose to diminish it! You produce too much. They propose to *increase* it! They desire to stop the manufacturing operations of the Eastern States. They propose to convert all those engaged in these operations into farmers, to raise wheat and oats on our sterile hills, or to emigrate South and raise them in a far more fertile and prolific soil. At the same time, therefore, that they *diminish* the *demand*, they would *increase* the *supply*. And this is their way of remedying the evils under which agriculture suffers.

I know that agriculture is now apparently in a state of depression. The produce of farmers sells at prices which I wish were higher. But look at the state of things. No doubt the works of internal improvement, which have brought the produce of the West into the midst of you, have had some effect. No doubt in times past the depression of manufactures has had some effect. After all, we hope there is a tendency to a better state of things; that the progress of things is onward, and that agriculture will soon receive its just reward. Sure I am, as sure as I am of any principle, moral or political, that, if there is such a thing as benefiting the agriculture of the country, it is to be accomplished by urging forward manufactures and the mechanical arts. This will multiply the number of consumers, and thus raise the prices of what they consume.

Gentlemen, I see a little printed tract which has been circulated largely over the country, full of what I think are errors. I will not not call them misrepresentations. It is dedicated to Mr. Greely, who, I hope, will acknowledge the dedication, and answer it in his own way. It purports to state prices, which it appears to me are all imaginary. The tariff was passed in 1842, in the summer. The writer of this tract states that there has been a fall in the price of beef, from $8 in 1843 to $5 in 1844. What has the tariff to do with beef? I wish I had known where beef could have been sold in 1843 for $8; as I

happened then to have a little of the article to dispose of. And so of the rest; the prices are all imaginary. If the price-currents ever set forth such prices as are here stated, they never met my eye.

In the next place, he says that the price of manufactured goods has risen. What does he mean by this? He says, Cocheco, and other prints with hard names, have risen in 1844. Every one must see the fallacy of all such reasoning as this. In 1841 and 1842 manufactures were greatly depressed; a great many establishments stopped. The business of the country was stagnant, for in order to have business active, people must be able to buy as well as to sell. It is generally known that no dividends were made by manufacturers during these years. When the tariff was passed, the goods then made were brought into market. But the question is not, if a man will be candid and just, whether the act of 1842 raised or lowered the prices of American goods. The question is, whether the general protection of American manufactures has not, on the whole, reduced the price of goods, so that a man can clothe himself cheaper than before. The inquiry should be, not as to the prices of a piece of cloth in 1842 and 1844, but as to the general effect of the tariff on the business of the country and the prosperity of the people.

Having thus, I fear at too great length, spoken of our past history and present condition, I will submit what I think is likely to be the future progress of the country. Under the favor of Providence, it is in our power, in a great measure, to prescribe this futurity, and to say what it shall be. If we choose to go in the path we have trod before, to adhere to the course of measures thus far in the main pursued, there is no reason to doubt that our prosperity will make progress, that we shall go on, step by step, until we attain any desirable degree of national greatness. If, on the contrary, we run counter to all that has hitherto been done, then, whatever others may expect, I look for nothing but disaster and distress.

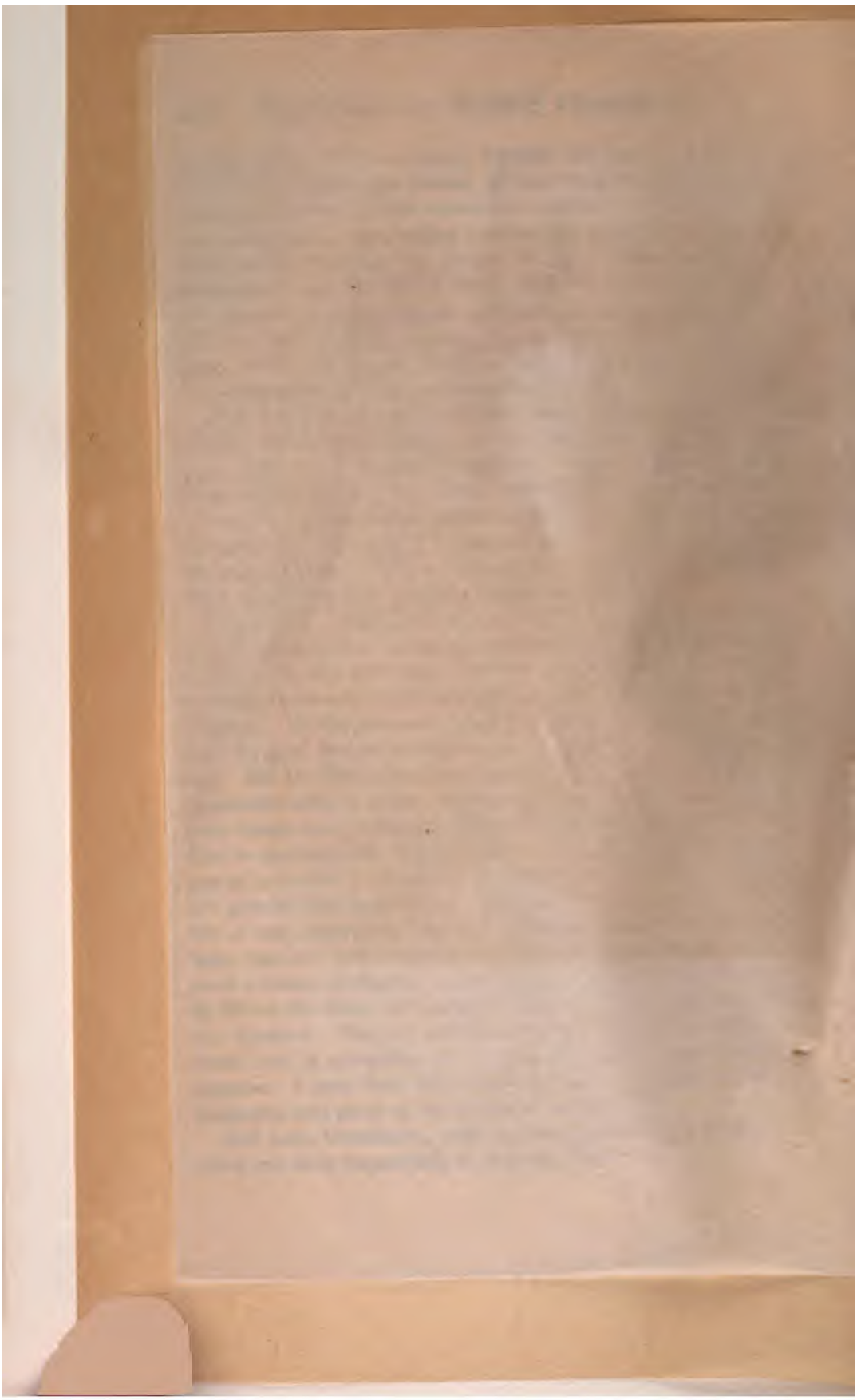
Gentlemen, there is another question about to be decided, most interesting to us and the whole country, to which I shall only allude by saying, that this subject of the annexation of Texas is one of those which give the greatest intensity of interest to the impending election.

But the great question before the public is in regard to the

general policy of the country, whether we shall follow in the tracks of our fathers, or reverse all their opinions and all their measures, and take a new course for ourselves. And I put it to you to-day, and I am willing to leave the decision to this great State and to you, how the people of New York mean to bear themselves, how this great State means to conduct herself, in the decision of this question. Whosoever looks upon the map, and sees her stretching over so great an extent of the Union, or looks at the census and sees her large population, or looks at the commercial returns, must contemplate New York as holding a great, I had almost said a fearful, responsibility for the future conduct of this government. I do not doubt that her intelligent people will acquit themselves on this occasion as they think their own interests and the interests of the Union require. If I were to doubt that, I should doubt the continuance of the prosperity of our country; I should doubt that the interests of the United States would go forward, but I should expect to see them steadily decline, till they finally sunk in ruin.

Gentlemen, I will detain you no longer. To as many of you as are inhabitants of Albany, I desire to give my thanks for the kindness of this invitation, and for your hospitality. Of late years my intercourse with the good city of Albany has not been frequent. Of the great and good men of the State whom I have had the good fortune to know, some are not now among the living. Mr. De Witt Clinton, a man never to be mentioned by any American without entire respect; the late General Van Rensselaer, whose many virtues and amiable qualities seemed to enable him to overcome the difficulty of a "camel's going through the eye of a needle"; Governor Tompkins, and Mr. Van Vechten, are gone to their final homes. Among those with whom, in early life or early manhood, I had the pleasure to form acquaintance here, two are still living, at an advanced age, having enlightened a whole profession, and reflected great honor by their public life on the State and country, Chancellor Kent and Chief Justice Spencer. They are not here to-day; but they are with us, I doubt not, in sympathy and feeling, full of the same patriotic purpose. I pray God they may long live to see and enjoy the prosperity and glory of our common country.

And now, Gentlemen, with my best good wishes for you all, allow me most respectfully to take my leave.



A.W. Elson & Co. Boston

Whig Convention at Philadelphia

Introductory Note

THE meeting at which the following speech was delivered was one of the largest and most enthusiastic ever held in the city of Philadelphia. Besides the inhabitants of the city, there was a great attendance from the eastern counties of the State. The United States Gazette of the 2d of October, 1844, gives an animated account of the celebration, of which the following is an abridgment: —

"Philadelphia has been the scene of many gallant displays, — heart-cheering and evincing the fulness of enthusiasm. Brilliant processions have swept through her streets; shouts have arisen from living masses congregated to evince their attachment to principles or to men; and multitudes have gathered to listen to the inspiring eloquence of some favorite orator. There have been great occasions and great displays in honor of them; but there never was one which, in grand and imposing effect, as an evidence of attachment to great principles, and to the great men who advocate them, can at all compare with that of yesterday.

"Never have we seen the population of Philadelphia so completely, either marshalled into a procession, or poured into the streets through which it passed. Business was completely at a stand, for it was felt by the mass of the population that the time had come when it was necessary for all to make a sacrifice of private interest to the public good.

"The previous evening gave promise in various ways of the stirring interest of the ensuing day. At the earliest dawn the work of preparation was visible. In many streets flags and streamers were stretched across from house to house. Market Street presented a forest of flags and pennons. Fourth Street, Front Street, and the shipping at the wharves, were adorned in the same way. The sky was without a cloud.

"The crowds soon increased to throngs. The houses in the streets through which the procession was to pass were filled, many of the windows being occupied by ladies. The masses in the streets were so

compact, that it was at times difficult for the procession to make its way.

"From the beginning to the end of the route, there was a continuous mass of people; and when at last the procession poured into the fields, where the meeting was to be held, a most magnificent spectacle was presented. When the meeting was organized, it was estimated that at least fifty thousand persons were assembled on the ground.

"Hon. John Sergeant was chosen President of the Convention, and introduced the business of the day by an appropriate and eloquent address. The following speech was then delivered by Mr. Webster.'

Whig Convention at Philadelphia*

Fellow-Citizens of Pennsylvania: — I am happy to be with you, in this assembling of ourselves together, to manifest the interest I feel in the great cause which has convened you, and my deep concern for the issue of the election now pending. But I come with no expectation of adding any thing of information or argument to the side which you and I espouse. The questions at issue have been discussed, by persons of abilities, all over the country. Most reading men have had opportunity to examine for themselves; and most thinking men, time to mature their judgments. Yet, Gentlemen, if this meeting shall have the effect of awakening what may remain of listlessness and indifference, and of inspiring new activity and new firmness of purpose, an important end will be accomplished, and much good done. Political friends are cheered, we are all cheered, by manifestations of common feeling and a common resolution. We take courage from one another; we obtain new impulses from sympathy. If this meeting shall arouse public attention, if unthinking men shall be made by it to think and to observe, if we shall find ourselves prompted by new zeal, and resolved on more vigorous efforts, then we have assembled for good, and may congratulate ourselves that a duty to our country has been performed.

Gentlemen, although there are two great parties in the country, with distinct and opposing candidates for high office, and avowing and maintaining, in general, different and opposing principles and opinions, yet in this great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania there is something quite peculiar in the pretensions

* Speech delivered at a great Whig Convention at Philadelphia, on the 1st of October, 1844.

and conduct of one of these parties, in regard to the principles which it claims for itself, or assigns to its candidates. I pray permission, Gentlemen, to invite your attention to this peculiarity. A singular stratagem seems to be attempted; the putting on of a new face, the speaking with a new voice, and the assumption of quite a new deportment and behavior. This is worthy of close observation and regard. Generally speaking, the two parties, throughout the whole country, are divided and opposed upon one great and leading question of the times, I mean the subject of Protection, as it is called.

The Whig party maintain the propriety of protecting, by custom-house regulations, various pursuits and employments among ourselves. Our opponents repudiate this policy, and embrace the doctrines of what is called free trade. This is the general party line. The distinction is not a local, but a party distinction. Thus, while the Whig States of New England are all in favor of a protective tariff, New Hampshire and Maine, which are not Whig States, are opposed to it. And south of the Potomac, it would be difficult, I suppose, to find any men, but avowed Whigs, who favor the tariff policy.

Tariff or no tariff, protection or no protection, thus becomes a great leading question All Whigs are on one side, and, generally speaking, all who are not Whigs on the other. But then arises the *peculiarity* in the state of things in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania is a strong tariff State. Among her citizens, the protective policy overrides the general division of political parties, and men who are not Whigs support that policy, firmly and ardently. This is clear. Every body knows it, and it needs no proof. Well, then, what has happened in consequence of this well-known state of opinion in Pennsylvania?

Does the party here act against the tariff? Does it speak the same language which it speaks in Carolina? O, no! nothing like it. In Carolina, and other States, the whole party exists, principally, for the purpose of putting down the tariff, and looting it out to the last fibre. They call it the "black tariff"; they denounce it as cruel and oppressive; and they openly intimate the idea that a disruption of the bonds of our national union would be a less evil, than the establishment and continuance of protective principles. But lo! when they come into Pennsylvania, all is changed. Here they themselves are professed tariff

men. Mr. Polk, their candidate for the Presidency, is declared to be a supporter of the tariff, a protectionist, a thorough Pennsylvanian on all these subjects. This is, at least, a bold stroke of policy. I will not say how respectful it is to the intelligence of Pennsylvania; I will only say it is a bold, a very bold, political movement. In every State where the anti-tariff policy is predominant, or in which the party holds anti-tariff opinions, there Mr. Polk is pressed upon the confidence of the people as an anti-tariff man, and because he is an anti-tariff man; an anti-tariff man, as they commonly say, "up to the hub." But in Pennsylvania his claims to confidence and support are urged with equal zeal on the opposite ground, that is to say, because he is a tariff man, and a tariff man equally "up to the hub." Here the whole party, their speakers, their writers, their press, adopt fully, and support warmly, the tariff principles of the Whigs, the tariff principles of Pennsylvania. Here they sail under the Whig flag, they would get into the Whig ship, seize the Whig rudder, and throw the old crew overboard. Or, if they keep in their own craft, they still hoist false colors, give their vessel a new name, and destroy the old log-book.

Gentlemen, I think if Mr. Polk were in a circle of friends, composed partly of citizens of Carolina, and partly of those of Pennsylvania, he would find himself in a curious dilemma. It would be a wonder, if he did not set these two sorts of friends at once by the ears. The Carolina gentlemen would shout, "Polk for ever, and down with the tariff of 1842!" The Pennsylvania gentlemen would say, "Polk *and* the tariff of 1842 for ever!" And what would Mr. Polk say? Why, uttering his own well-known opinions, he would say to his Carolina friends, "Gentlemen, you do me no more than justice. I am opposed to the tariff of 1842, and think it ought to be repealed. In the canvass against Governor Jones, in Tennessee, last year, I made more than one hundred speeches against it. I am for bringing all duties down to the point they were at in June, 1842; that is to say, to one uniform rate of twenty per cent. You know I have agreed with you throughout on this great question of tariff for protection. I have opposed it by my speeches, by my pledges, by numerous and repeated declarations, and by my votes. All show what I have thought, and what I think now. I now repeat my opposition, and renew my pledges."

This would be manly, this would be fact, this would be all right; and Carolina huzzas, and Carolina clapping of hands, would not unnaturally, with characteristic earnestness, follow this plain and frank declaration. But how would the Pennsylvania gentlemen stand this? How could Mr. Polk appease them? I will not say that he would, with his own tongue, and from his own lips, speak a directly contrary language to them. I do not think him capable of such effrontery. But if he were to give utterance to the opinions which those put in his mouth who support him here in Pennsylvania, he would say, "My dear friends of Pennsylvania, you have heard what I have said to the Carolina gentlemen. Never mind. I don't know exactly what I am, but I rather think I am a better tariff man than Henry Clay! I am for *incidental* protection; and that is a great matter. It is rather strong, to be sure, after all I have said in Tennessee, to raise, in Pennsylvania, the cry of 'Polk *and* the tariff of 1842!' Nevertheless, let the cry go forth!"

Now, Gentlemen, what excellent party harmony would be produced, if Mr. Polk's two sets of friends could hear him utter these sentiments at the same time, and in the same room! And yet they are uttered every day in the same country, and in regard to the same election. The more loudly Carolina, and other States holding her sentiments, cry out, "Polk, and down with the tariff!" the more sturdily does the party press in Pennsylvania raise the opposite shout. Now, Gentlemen, there is an old play, named, I think, "*Who's the Dupe?*" An answer, and here it is an important one, is to be given to the question, "Who is the dupe?" and we shall see, in the end, on which party the laugh falls.

Gentlemen, incidental protection, which some persons, just now, would represent as transcendental protection, what is it? It is no protection at all, and does not deserve the name. It is a result which comes, if it comes at all, without design, without certainty, and without discrimination. It falls on tea and coffee, as well as on iron and broadcloth. Let us not be deluded by such a thin and flimsy pretext. It is an insult to our understandings. Gentlemen, I have come here for no purpose of oratory, nor eloquence, nor display. This is not the occasion for any thing of that kind. If I ever had any such ambition, it has long since passed away, and I hope now only to be useful

to you, useful to the great cause in which we are all engaged; and this, and this only, has brought me here. I shall speak with that plainness and frankness with which a man ought to speak, directly and earnestly, feeling as a man ought to feel who has at heart the importance of what he says. This service in which we are engaged is no holiday service, no mere display, no passing pageant, but serious and solemn; serious, as far as any thing can be serious in the secular affairs of men. I come here, then, to use no ornaments of speech, no trope, no metaphor. Honestly and sincerely I come to speak to you out of the abundance of my heart, and I beg you to receive what I have to say in the spirit with which it is delivered.

No wonder that among you, Pennsylvanians, the party that is opposed to us represents itself friendly to the tariff. It is well known that Pennsylvania is favorable to the tariff, and that is no wonder. She is a State of great mineral interests, and is therefore as much interested in the tariff as any State in the Union, not to say more. She has, it is probable, more to lose than any other State by a change of policy on the part of the federal government, because she cannot so easily recover as other States might from the effect of any great change. In addition to her minerals, which are her richest treasures, she has her artisans, her workers in iron, her workers in metals, her spinners, her weavers, her laborers of every pursuit and occupation. Her treasures not only lie embosomed in the earth, but are spread out in every workshop in the country. There is not an operative, nor a working man, who is not interested in, and supported by, the protective laws of the government. Protection touches every man's bread. If ever, then, there was a subject worthy of the attention of a public man or of a statesman, it is this of protection. No wonder, I repeat, that every Pennsylvanian is engaged in the cause of protection; the wonder would be if he were not.

I have often said heretofore, and I repeat it now, that there is not on the globe a spot naturally richer in all the elements of greatness than Pennsylvania, except England, if, indeed, England be an exception. This is the view of the subject which, it appears to me, both public men and private individuals in Pennsylvania ought to consider. Pennsylvania is full of capacities, full of natural wealth. What policy is best calculated to ex-

hibit those capacities, and to draw out that natural wealth? That is the great question; that forms the great topic; and now, fellow-citizens of Pennsylvania, what have you to say to it?

Pennsylvania is favored in climate, far more than the State to which I belong. She is favored, too, by position, her eastern line being closely connected with the sea, and her western with the great rivers of the West; while large and useful streams flow from her mountains, east and west, and north and south. She has a soil of remarkable fertility, especially suited to the production of wheat and other kinds of grain. But these are far from being all. She is rich, most rich, in treasures which lie beneath the surface. England possesses her East Indies and her West Indies; but it has been said, with truth, that, as sources of wealth, these are little in comparison with her "Black Indies." Coal and iron are among the chief productive causes of English opulence and English power. The acquisition of the whole empire of the Great Mogul is far less important, and all the mines of Mexico and Peru, if she should acquire them, would be less valuable, than these exhaustless treasures, lying in her own bosom.

Now, Gentlemen, how does Pennsylvania compare with England? In the first place, England and Wales embrace an extent of fifty-seven thousand square miles; Pennsylvania has an area of forty-three thousand. Here, as you perceive, is an approach to equality. Both abound in coal and iron; and probably Pennsylvania has as great a variety of the former, both anthracite and bituminous, as England. The value of coal, in its application to that new agent in human affairs, the use of steam, it is impossible to calculate or estimate. Steam has so far altered the modes of motion, and the forms of human industry and human action, that it may be said to have changed the world. It almost seems that we are whirling round the sun on a new orb, or at least had got into a new creation of things. We fly over the earth's surface, with a rapidity greater than that of the wings of the wind; we penetrate beneath its surface, and with a new and mighty power bring its hidden treasures up to the light of the sun. New agencies are at work, in all departments of business, and the processes of labor are everywhere revolutionized.

In this change, and in the causes which have produced it,

Pennsylvania is singularly and eminently interested; more so, probably, than any other State in the Union. Steam develops her resources, and turns them all to good account; but the development is yet only partial. Probably the coal field of Pennsylvania may be something less in area than that of England and Wales; but this is of little importance, as the supply seems adequate for ages and centuries to come. But the actual annual product is small, compared with that of England. England produces annually thirty millions of tons of coal, worth, at the pit's mouth, sixty or seventy millions of dollars. What an amount of wealth is this, from a single source! Pennsylvania is supposed to produce a million and a half of tons of anthracite coal, and perhaps as much of the bituminous kind. This is all her present product, with a capacity to supply the continent. Now, Gentlemen, how does this product bear on the employment and occupation of her citizens? How does it affect the great interests of labor and industry? This is an important point. If the existence of mines be useful to capitalists alone, it is one thing; but if their existence, and the working of them, be beneficial to the industrious and working classes, then they become quite another thing. Let us see how this is. I am told that coal in the mines may be regarded as worth, generally, thirty cents a ton, that is to say, the right of digging it may be obtained at that price. When dug and made ready for delivery, it is worth two dollars, or two dollars and a quarter, a ton. Now, what does this prove? Why, it proves, certainly, that, of the whole value of a ton of coal, the raw material composes thirty cents, and the labor employed and paid for in producing it from a hundred and seventy to a hundred and ninety-five cents. This last sum, therefore, is earned, by the labor and industry of Pennsylvania, on every ton of coal, making, of course, proper allowance for capital employed in machinery. But then this machinery, again, is itself a product of labor. We may pursue this subject into its details, as far as we please; the pursuit will always end in the establishment of the great principle, that labor is the source of wealth, and another great principle, fairly deducible from it, and equally clear, that, to judge of the general prosperity and happiness of a people, we are to look, in the first place, to the amount of useful, healthy, and well-paid *labor* which that people performs. It is this new

demand for labor, created by the working of the mines, that makes the subject so important to the whole people of Pennsylvania. Every new demand for well-paid labor is a new source of prosperity and happiness to the great mass of the community. But this is a vast topic, and I have not now time to go far into it. It so happened, that ten or twelve years ago I addressed an assembly of the citizens of Pennsylvania at Pittsburg. On that occasion I expressed my opinions at some length, on the subject of American labor. Those opinions I still hold, with increased confidence in their truth and justice, and to them I beg leave respectfully to refer you.*

Another great mineral product of Pennsylvania is iron; in this respect, too, your State resembles England. England produces, annually, one million and a half of tons of pig iron. Eight or ten years ago, she did not produce one third of this amount; and this vast increase shows the extent of the new demand for the article, and her increased activity in producing it. But the chief value of iron, as well as of coal, consists of labor, directly or indirectly employed in the production. In the first place, it may be remarked, that the manufacture of iron consumes a vast quantity of coal. It has been computed that the production of a million and a half tons of iron, in England, requires six million tons of coal. Here is a case in which one occupation acts most favorably on another. But in the next place, miners of iron, and all classes of laborers employed in bringing the crude ore through the several stages of progress till it assumes the shape of bar iron, are, of course, to be fed, and clothed, and supported. All this creates a demand for provisions and various agricultural products. It has been estimated, that, for every ton of iron brought to market, twenty dollars have been paid away for agricultural labor and productions.

Now, Gentlemen, if these things be so, if this view of the case be substantially correct, how plain is it, that it is for the interest of every working man in Pennsylvania, of every occupation, that coal and iron should be produced at home, instead of being imported from abroad? To be sure, if the mines were poor and scanty, and could only be wrought at a far greater expense than mines elsewhere; or if the material, when produced, were of an

* The speech here referred to was delivered at Pittsburg, July 9th, 1833. See Vol. II. p. 135.

inferior sort, then the case might be different. But, in fact, richer mines, or mines more easily wrought, do not exist on the face of the earth. Nothing is wanted but a policy which shall give to our own enterprise and our own labor a fair chance, and a just encouragement to begin with. Pennsylvania, indeed, is not the only iron-producing State. Much of that metal is found in New York, in Maryland, in Tennessee; and some in other States. The interest, therefore, is in a good degree general.

But it is said that twenty per cent. *ad valorem* is duty enough, and, if iron cannot be made at home under such a duty, we ought to send for it to England or to Sweden. Now, in all reason, and according to all experience, this must very much depend upon the state, the degree of advancement, in which the interest proposed to be protected is found. Useful undertakings often require encouragement and stimulus in the beginning, which may afterwards be dispensed with. The product of English iron exemplifies this. At present that interest needs no protection; but up to 1820 it enjoyed the protection of quite as high a rate of duty as now exists in the United States. Now, it may well defy competition for the market at home. And it is well to bear in mind, that the existing tariff of duties in England imposes no less a rate than £42 19*s.* 6*d.* on every hundred pounds in value of imported goods, making an average of the whole. Certainly there is not much of the spirit of free trade in this.

Now, I repeat, Gentlemen, that it is not wonderful that a State in the condition of Pennsylvania, and of the character of Pennsylvania, — a State industrious, full of resources, and every way capable of drawing them out, — should favor a policy favorable to their development. It would be wonderful if it were otherwise. It would be wonderful, indeed, if she should manifest a disposition to throw off the steam from her thousand engines, put out the fires, and close up her mines. The interest of all her people points the other way. And her aggregate interest, her interest as represented by her government, her own State policy, — does that not point in the same direction? The government of Pennsylvania has created a heavy debt, and it has embarrassed its finances, for the purpose of constructing canals and railroads, to furnish means and facilities of transportation, and to bring the great products of the State to market. She will

we have too much consciousness of truth for—— (Here a voice cried out, "We won't have him at all.") Well, I'm pretty much of that opinion myself. But let us take our ruler for what he really is, not for what he is not, and thereby show that we have been duped and deceived. Let us have too much consciousness of truth, too much self-respect, too much regard for the opinion of the world, to take Mr. Polk for that which he is not, and never was, and does not profess to be.

Let us, then, see what are the sentiments of Mr. Polk on the protective policy. Is he with us, or is he against us? What does he say himself on this subject? I know no reason why he should not be believed. I don't go back to the time of his boyhood. I don't go back to the days of his grandfather, Ezekiel Polk. I need not even go back to the period of his Congressional services, but I will take the Mr. Polk of last year, running for a popular office, not that of President of the United States, but that of Governor of Tennessee. You know that, in that part of the country, it is common for the candidates for popular offices to go forth, and state frankly to the people whose suffrages they solicit what their opinions are on all the great subjects, social and political, of the day. Now, what does Mr. Polk say of himself on this occasion?

"I am opposed to direct taxes, and to prohibitory and *protective duties;* and in favor of such moderate duties as will not cut off importations. In other words, I am in favor of reducing the duties to the rates of the Compromise Act, where the Whig Congress found them on the 29th of June, 1842."

These are his own words, his own opinions, from his own speech; and, as the lawyers say, I lay the venue, and I give the date, in order that there may be no misunderstanding. It is from his speech of the 3d of April, 1843, in reply to Milton Brown, at Jackson, and was published in the Nashville Union of the 5th of May, 1843.

Here he is plain, distinct, direct, and cannot be misunderstood. He is for bringing all duties to the same rate, and that rate is twenty per cent. *ad valorem*, and no more; for that was the rate at which the Whig Congress found all duties on the 29th of June, 1842.

He is therefore for repealing the act which altered that rate;

that is to say, he is for abolishing the present tariff. No language can make this plainer. And let me add, that any man in the United States who wishes to abolish the present tariff will vote for Mr. Polk. It remains to be seen whether those who are in favor of the present tariff, who are of opinion that it ought to be continued and upheld, can be brought, by misrepresentation and false pretences, to join its enemies and coöperate for its overthrow. That is the true and real question.

Again, Mr. Polk says he is "for such moderate duties as will not cut off importations." Very well; this is explicit; all can understand it.

Now if we do not wish to cut off the importations of coal and iron, and the various products of English manufactures, then we shall agree with Mr. Polk; but if we do wish to cut off these importations, then we shall disagree with him and disagree with his policy; for he would have only such moderate duties as will not cut off importations. But, as I have said, he is quite explicit, and I thank him for it. He would reduce the duties to the rates of the Compromise Act, as they existed in 1842, when they afforded no protection at all. But there is a tariff in existence at present, and some questions were put to him to this effect: Are you in favor of that tariff, or are you not? Will you support it, or will you try to repeal it? To these questions, put since he has been a candidate for the Presidency, he stands mute. There are humane considerations occasionally employed in courts of law, when persons are mute; but when a man can answer and does not answer, when he is perfectly able, but entirely unwilling, to make a reply, then we have a right to put our own construction on the case. But it was entirely unnecessary to put these questions to Mr. Polk; he had already stated that he wanted the duties reduced to the Compromise standard. The duties in June, 1842, had come down to twenty per cent. without discrimination; so, therefore, Mr. Polk was in favor of bringing down the duties to twenty per cent. on all imported articles.

In a written address to the people of Tennessee, dated May 29, 1843, Mr. Polk expresses his sentiments in a still more considerate manner. Here is the address: —

"To the People of Tennessee.

"*Winchester, May* 29, 1843.

"The object which I had in proposing to Governor Jones at Carrollville, on the 12th of April last, that we should each write out and publish our views and opinions on the subject of the tariff, was, that our respective positions might be distinctly known and understood by the people. That my opinions were already fully and distinctly known I could not doubt. I had steadily, during the period I was a Representative in Congress, been opposed to a protective policy, as my recorded votes and published speeches prove. Since I retired from Congress I had held the same opinions. In the present canvass for Governor, I had avowed my opposition to the tariff of the late Whig Congress, as being highly *protective* in its character, and not designed by its authors as a revenue measure. I had avowed my opinion in my public speeches, that the interests of the country, and especially of the producing classes, required its repeal, and the restoration of the principles of the Compromise Tariff Act of 1833."

Now come forth, any man in this assembly who pretends to be a tariff man, and tell us what he has to say to this? Is Mr. Polk a tariff man, or is he not? Honor is due to Mr. Polk's sincerity. Indeed, he does not speak like a man who is making a confession, but rather as a man who is claiming a merit. Before the people of Tennessee, he insisted upon it that he was an original, consistent, thorough, whole-souled anti-tariff man. He says he wishes his opinions to be distinctly known and understood by the people. I hope he means still that his opinions shall be distinctly understood by the people; for he says, he had been steadily opposed to a protective policy while in Congress, and he had held the same opinions ever since. Now there cannot be any thing more explicit than this declaration, out of the mouth of the man himself; and he will no more deny this than he will deny his own name. And since he avers all this, insists upon it, and repeats it over and over again, what friend of his will stand up to deny it and give him the lie to his face?

But let us see again. How did those regard him who brought him forward as their candidate for the Presidency of the United States? Take the case of the South Carolina members, for instance. A resolution was brought forward by Mr. Elmore, in Charleston, by which the anti-tariff gentlemen of that part of

the world resolved to support him with all their hearts. This is the resolution: —

"Resolved, That by the election of James K. Polk, and the defeat of Henry Clay, a substantial victory will be gained by the Constitution, — the Presidential power and influence will be in the hands of a Southern man, *a friend of free trade*, and identified with us in our institutions, and an enemy of the protective policy and Abolitionism! and we ought not, by any action of our State, to embarrass or lessen the chances of his election, in which much may be gained, or cause his defeat, by which so much must be lost, and by which we shall draw on ourselves the blame of our friends in other States, change their kind feelings into coldness, perhaps resentment and hostility, by unnecessarily weakening and embarrassing them, and thus increasing the numbers and spirit of our enemies, and adding to our difficulties in obtaining justice."

Now please remember, all ye citizens of Pennsylvania, — please remember, all ye who are tariff men, and who are yet disposed to follow the party, and to vote for Mr. Polk, — please remember, I say, one and all, that the fixed, unalterable anti-tariff men of the South support Mr. Polk, because they regard him as one of themselves.

We have recently, Gentlemen, seen a published letter from Mr. H. L. Pinkney, of Charleston, S. C., a gentleman of much personal respectability, and of high standing with his political friends. The letter was written to the committee of what was called the Macon Democratic Mass Meeting, and it was dated the 19th of August last.

In this letter Mr. Pinkney says, —

"It is the policy of the Whigs, and some of our Democrats, too, to represent Colonel Polk as a protectionist, in consequence of his recent letter to Mr. Kane of Philadelphia. But no charge was ever more unfounded. It is contradicted by the whole tenor of his political life. It is refuted by all his speeches and votes in relation to the tariff, for a long series of years.

"His doctrine of a tariff for revenue as the primary object, with incidental protection to manufactures, is the very doctrine of South Carolina. It is the doctrine of the Baltimore Convention, in which he concurs, and which has been generally assented to by the Democratic party of South Carolina. It is the doctrine of the celebrated exposition published by the Legislature of this State, and has always been recognized as the creed of the State Rights party."

I have one more proof to lay before you, and I then take leave of this part of the subject. It is the declaration of Mr. Holmes of Charleston, a man of lead and influence with his friends, and now member of Congress from that city.

After Mr. Polk had been nominated, at Baltimore, some of Mr. Holmes's political friends wrote to him, propounding certain questions relating to Mr. Polk, and calling with emphasis for answers. The first question was this: —

"Are you in favor of the election of Mr. Polk and Mr. Dallas, the Democratic candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the United States; and are you, or not, of the opinion that the vote of South Carolina should be given, in good faith, for them?"

The second question was this: —

"Whatever may be your opinion of Mr. Polk's ability, in the event of his election, to effect a repeal of the tariff of 1842, and to break down the protective system, have you any doubt of the sincerity of his opposition to the entire system of protection, and that the influence of his high office will be in good faith exerted to subvert it?"

To these questions Mr. Holmes returned the following prompt, brief, and pithy answer: —

"Gentlemen, — I have just received your letter, in which two queries are distinctly put, and as distinctly will I reply.

"1st. I am in favor of the election of Mr. Polk and Mr. Dallas, and am decidedly of the opinion that South Carolina ought to vote for them.

"2d. I have no doubt of Mr. Polk's sincerity when he declared his opposition to the entire system of protection, and that, if elected, he will endeavor to subvert it."

Here is the opinion of Mr. Holmes, a distinguished member of Congress, of the anti-tariff party; and let me tell you, once more, that he speaks the opinions of the whole anti-tariff party of the South.

These evidences might be accumulated, but it would be useless. Those who really desire to know the truth, and are willing to embrace it, and act upon it, surely can need nothing more on this point.

Gentlemen, I remember that Mr. Polk has said that he is against the duty on wool. Very well; so are other anti-tariff men. Let this be known, fully and fairly, to your great county

of Washington (Penn.), as well as to other wool-growing districts; and if the people of that county still say they are in favor of Mr. Polk, I must admit they have a right to be so. But, still, let them take him as he is, and for what he is, and not for something which he is not. There are some who say, that, even if Mr. Polk be an anti-tariff man, and should be elected President of the United States, yet he cannot repeal the tariff or overcome our policy. Strange doctrine! We choose him that he may not triumph over us after choosing him! We elect him that he may not destroy the policy he is opposed to! We choose him to prevent his destroying that which we think ought to be preserved! Strange argument for sensible men! If we knew that he would not be able to carry out his policy, or to exercise that power which the office would give him to abolish the tariff, would that be a reason why we should withhold our opposition? Not at all! There is the evil of perpetual agitation, of perpetual doubt, of perpetual uncertainty; there is the evil of perpetual opposition to the duration of the protective policy. Will capital be employed to bring out the mineral wealth of this great State, if it be doubtful whether those so employing it will be protected in their enterprise or not? No! Once more I say, most assuredly, No! What the country needs is security and stability; a permanent, settled policy, that enterprising and industrious men may be enabled to give direction to their capital and means, and labor with the assurance, with the unshaken confidence, that there will be no violent fluctuation in the state of the law.

Gentlemen, the citizens of Massachusetts have no especial interest of their own in favoring the coal and iron of Pennsylvania. We are large purchasers of the articles, and free trade, or free admission, in regard to them, would be best for us. But we have other interests, and we see other interests all over the country, calling for a wise system of custom-house duties; and we embrace that policy which we think essential to the good of the whole. We desire no favoritism, no partial system. The interests of the people of these two great States, the interests of the people of all the States, are bound up in one bond. But I say, that, if Mr. Polk be elected President of the United States, with the general concurrence of the popular branch of the legislature, either the tariff will be repealed, or so much disturbed

as to dishearten its friends, and make them turn from it with disgust. This is a thing of the deepest interest. It rests with you of Pennsylvania to decide this; for without the vote of Pennsylvania, I undertake to say, he cannot be elected President of the United States. It is for you to say. Give me your assurance that he will not get the vote of Pennsylvania, and I will give you my assurance that he will not be elected President of the United States. Any man may make the canvass, any man may go over the votes from Maine to Missouri, and he will, he must, be convinced that it is absolutely certain that Mr. Polk cannot be elected without the vote of the Keystone State! And it is equally certain, that without the vote of this State he remains at home, a private and respectable citizen of the State of Tennessee.

I wish every man in Pennsylvania to consider this, that on his vote, and the vote of his fellow-citizen, his neighbor, or his kinsman, depends the issue whether Mr. Polk be elected President or not. And I say that any man who attempts to convey the impression to another, any man of information, — whether it be done in the highways or by-ways, in parlor or kitchen, in cellar or garret, — any man, who shall be found telling another that Mr. Polk is in favor of the tariff, means to cheat an honest Pennsylvanian out of the fair use of the elective franchise! And if there be not spirit enough in Pennsylvania to repel so gross a misrepresentation, then Pennsylvania is not that Pennsylvania which I have so long respected and admired.

I am admonished, my friends, by the descent of the sun, that I must bring my remarks to a close. I was desirous of saying a few words to you about Texas. (Cries of "Go on!" "Go on!" "Tell us about Texas.") Well, I will only say, in relation to Texas, that you will find in the archives of your own State that which is far more important than all I can say upon the subject. But I do say that the annexation of Texas would tend to prolong the duration and increase the extent of African slavery on this continent. I have long held that opinion, and I would not now suppress it for any consideration on earth! And because it does increase the evils of slavery, because it will increase the number of slaves and prolong the duration of their bondage, — because it does all this, I oppose it without condition and without qualification, at this time and all times, now and for ever.

In 1780 the Legislature of Pennsylvania passed the act abolishing slavery in this State. It was introduced by a grateful acknowledgment to God for the achievement of American liberty, for that assistance by which the people had been enabled to break the chains of a foreign power, and by the enjoyment and assumption of a duty conformable to that, to do all that they could to break all other chains and set the world free.

That preamble was the work of your fathers; they sleep in honored graves; there is not, I believe, one man living now who was engaged in that most righteous act. There are words in that preamble fit to be read by all who inherit the blood, by all who bear the name, by all who cherish the memory, of an honored and virtuous ancestry. And I ask every one of you now present, ere eight-and-forty hours pass over your heads, to turn to that act, to read that preamble, and if you are Pennsylvanians the blood will stir and prompt you to your duty. There are arguments in that document far surpassing any thing that my poor ability could advance on the subject, and there I leave it.*

In answering an invitation to address the citizens of Pennsylvania, in another place, a short time ago, I observed that I had a desire to say a few words to the people of the State. I have now said them. I have said, and I repeat, that the result of the approaching election rests much in your hands. You may decide it favorably to the interests and honor of the country. Without your concurrence, Mr. Polk cannot be chosen. I wish to state this to you, and to leave it with you, in the strongest possible manner.

We are all, in Massachusetts, interested in the manner you give your votes at the coming Presidential election, and you are as much interested in the manner in which we give ours. But there is another election to be shortly decided in this State besides the Presidential election. It would ill become me to interfere in the elections by another State of its own State officers. I will not do so farther than to say, that the manner in which this first election of yours is conducted, and shall result, will have a great effect on the hopes and prospects of the Whigs in reference to that which is so soon to come after it.

* See preamble to the act of the Legislature of Pennsylvania for the gradual abolition of slavery, passed 1780, Pennsylvania Laws, Vol. I. p. 492.

I need not tell you that there is a great curiosity among the Whigs of other States, — *curiosity* is a term that is not strong enough for the feeling that exists, — there is a deep and strong *anxiety* prevailing all over the Union in relation to the way in which the Whigs shall conduct the next election in this State. Because it is perfectly plain to every one, that if the venerable man who was introduced to you this day,* — if that distinguished son of this great State, who was recently here on this platform, shall be elected Governor, there will be a brightening of the political skies, at the sight of which every true Whig in the Union will rejoice.

I have a few words to say to the people of this city, this fair and beautiful Philadelphia, this city of the Declaration of Independence, this city in which was matured and perfected the glorious Constitution of the United States, this noble city, which is connected with so much of the early history of our country and its subsequent prosperity! Can there be a doubt of the side which this city will take in the coming contest? I ask every young man to sit down and ask his conscience how he can give a vote for the subversion of all the best interests and the only correct policy of our beloved country! I ask every old man to remember the past, to reflect on the policy, the principles, and the men of other times, and to consider if all in that past does not prompt him to one course of action!

Fellow-citizens of Pennsylvania! There are subordinate questions, on which those may differ, without great injury, who agree in general principles. And there are questions of a temporary interest, in regard to which a wrong decision made now may be corrected hereafter. Such are not the questions now before us. The questions now before us touch, and touch vitally, great, and deep, and permanent interests of the country.

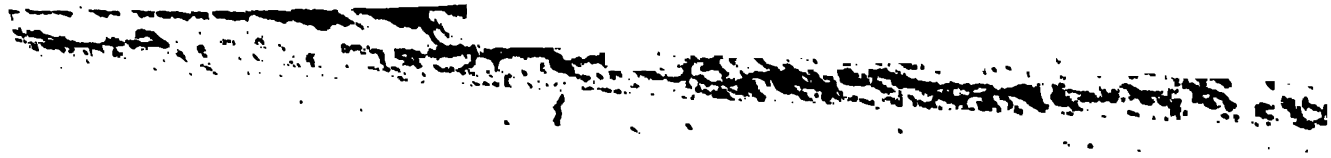
On these questions, brethren of the same principles must not differ. In saying this, while I look round about me, and see who compose this vast assembly, I have not, I hope, transcended the bounds of propriety. You understand me. I need not press the point more explicitly.

When great principles of government are at stake, when high and lasting interests are at hazard, I repeat, that, in such a crisis,

* General Markle, the Whig candidate for Governor.

friends must not allow themselves to divide upon questions respecting men, so as to defeat or endanger all their own dearest objects.

What we now do, we cannot undo. We do it once, and we do it for our generation, perhaps for ever. And so much of all our highest interests, our truest prosperity, and our best hopes depends on having this work well done, that I say once more, — I say it from the very bottom of my heart, — I say it with the most profound conviction of its importance, — brethren of the same principles must not be allowed to differ with regard to men.



Convention at Valley Forge

Convention at Valley Forge*

Two days after the foregoing speech was delivered at Philadelphia, Mr. Webster was invited to address a general convention of the Whigs of Chester and Montgomery Counties. The place appointed for the meeting was Valley Forge, a spot for ever famous in the annals of the Revolution, and still preserving the most interesting memorials of the dreadful winter of 1777 – 78. The information that Mr. Webster was expected to address the meeting had circulated widely throughout the neighboring townships, few of whose inhabitants had ever had an opportunity of hearing him. They accordingly assembled in great numbers and of both sexes. The village was filled, at an early hour, by the multitude, which poured in from every quarter. Processions were formed, with banners, wreaths, and emblems appropriate to the Revolutionary associations of the place, and significant of the principles and feelings which belonged to the present occasion. A strong mounted escort was in attendance at the railway station; and at nine o'clock, A. M., the train arrived from Philadelphia, with Mr. Webster and a large number of political friends from that city.

After a short time passed in a survey of the interesting localities of the spot, especially the house in which General Washington's quarters were established during the winter of 1777 – 78, the convention was organized by the appointment of Hon. Jonathan Roberts as President. After a forcible address from the chair, on the general objects of the meeting, Mr. Webster was introduced to the company, and delivered the following speech.

Ladies and Gentlemen, — There is a mighty power in local association. All acknowledge it, and all feel it! Those places naturally inspire us with emotion, which, in the course of human history, have been connected with great and interesting events;

* Speech delivered at a great Convention of the Whigs of Chester and Montgomery Counties, in Pennsylvania, at Valley Forge, on the 3d of October, 1844.

and this power over all ingenuous minds never ceases, until frequent visits familiarize the mind to the scenes.

There are in this vast multitude many who, like myself, never before stood on the spot where the Whig army of the Revolution, under the immediate command of their immortal leader, went through the privations, the sufferings, and the distress, of the winter of 1777 and 1778. The mention of Washington, the standing on the ground of his encampment, the act of looking around on the scenes which he and his officers and soldiers then beheld, cannot but carry us back, also, to the Revolution, and to one of its most distressing and darkest periods.

In September, the battle of Brandywine had been fought; in October, that of Germantown; and before Christmas, a little before the severity of winter set in, General Washington repaired to this spot, and put his army into huts for the winter. He had selected the position with great care, for the safety of his army, and with equal judgment, also, for the protection of as large a portion of the country as possible, the British troops being then in possession of Philadelphia.

We see, then, the Whig chief of the Whig army of the Revolution, as it were, before us. We see him surrounded by his military friends, distinguished not less for their social virtues than for their bravery in the field. Anthony Wayne was here, that great and good man. He was a native of the County of Chester, where his bones still rest. Green was here, and Knox, and Hamilton; and at that anxious moment, in order to keep alive the connection between the civil authority and the army, (for be it remembered now and at all times, that Washington and his army always acted in submission to the civil authority), a committee of Congress was here, Dana of Massachusetts, Gouverneur Morris, and that worthy gentleman, the especial favorite of Washington, who was afterwards President of your Commonwealth, General Reed.*

And now, Gentlemen, I could not depict, I could not describe, I could not trust my own feelings in attempting to describe, the horrible sufferings of that Whig army. Destitute of clothing, destitute of provisions, destitute of every thing but their trust in

* A very interesting letter from the Committee to the President of Congress, on the state of the army, written by General Reed, will be found in the Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed, by his Grandson, William B. Reed. Vol. I. p. 360 *et seq.*

God, and faith in their immortal leader, they went through that winter. The grounds now around us, particularly the grounds contiguous to the hospital, are rich in Revolutionary dust. Every excavation, as often as the season returns, brings to the surface the bones of Revolutionary officers and soldiers, who perished by disease, brought on by want of food, want of clothing, want of every thing but that boundless sympathy and commiseration for sufferings which he could not alleviate, that filled the bleeding heart of their illustrious leader. Long after peace returned, General Washington declared, at his own table, that it was no exaggeration, it was the literal truth, that the march of the army from Whitemarsh, to take up their quarters at this place, could be tracked by the blood on the snow from the unshod feet of the soldiers.

It is impossible to recall the associations of such a place without deep and solemn reflection. And when we, as Whigs, professing the principles of that great Whig leader and that Whig army, come here to advocate and avow those principles to one another, and professing to exercise the political rights transmitted to us by them, for the security of that liberty which they fought to establish, let us bring ourselves to feel in harmony with the scenes of the past. Let us endeavor to sober and solemnize our minds. For, if I have any apprehension of the condition of things under which we have met here, it is one that ought to produce that effect upon us. I feel, and all should feel, that there is a calamity impending over us. If we would avert that impending calamity, it is only to be done by a serious and manly course. And by the blood of our fathers, which cries to us from this hallowed ground, by the memory of their many virtues and brilliant achievements, by the sad story of their intense sufferings, by the blessings of that blood-bought inheritance of liberty which they suffered and died to obtain for us, we are called upon to perform the important duty that lies before us in the present crisis, to perform that duty fearlessly, to perform it promptly, and to perform it effectually.

It is under this feeling, my friends, that I come here to-day; and it is under this feeling that I intend to speak plainly and manfully, as man should speak to man, at a moment like this, on the important duties which are incumbent on us all.

We are on the eve of a general election, in which the people

are to choose a President and Vice-President of the United States. It is the great action of the citizen in carrying on his own plan of self-government. But the circumstances connected with this election render it peculiarly interesting, and of more importance than any former Presidential election. There are two candidates in the field, Mr. Clay of Kentucky, and Mr. Polk of Tennessee. I shall speak of them both with the respect to which their character and position entitle them; and at the same time with that freedom and candor which ought to be observed in discussing the merits of public men, especially those who are candidates for the highest office in the gift of the people.

Mr. Clay has been before the country for a long period, nearly forty years. Over thirty years he has taken a leading and highly important part in the public affairs of this country. He is acknowledged to be a man of singular and almost universal talent. He has had great experience in the administration of our public affairs in various departments. He has served for many years with wonderful judgment and ability, in both houses of Congress, of one of which he performed the arduous and difficult duties of its presiding officer, with unexampled skill and success. He has rendered most important services to his country of a diplomatic character, as the representative of this government in Europe, at one of the most trying periods of our history, and ably assisted to conduct to a satisfactory conclusion a very delicate and important negotiation. He has performed the duties of the department of state with ability and fidelity. He is a man of frankness and honor, of unquestioned talent and ability, and of a noble and generous bearing.

Mr. Polk is a much younger man than Mr. Clay. He is a very respectable gentleman in private life; he has been in Congress; was once Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, and once Governor of the State of Tennessee.

Such are the candidates before the country for its choice; and it will not be invidious to say, that, in point of character and talent, and general standing before the country and the world, there is no sort of comparison between the two men.

It is for the people to choose between them; and if they prefer one who is secondary to one who is first rate, such preferences can only be ascribed to one of two causes. If they prefer

Mr. Polk to Mr. Clay, it will be either because party attachment is so strong, that they will vote for any man that may be nominated by their party, independent of any other consideration whatever; or it will be because his measures, principles, and opinions are such as they approve, whilst the measures, principles, and opinions of Mr. Clay are such as they do not approve.

I suppose that the existence of parties in a republican government cannot be avoided; and to a certain extent, perhaps, under such form of government, they may exercise a wholesome, restraining, and necessary influence upon the rulers. But I still think that, when party spirit carries men so far that they will not inquire into the men and measures that are placed before them for their sanction and support, but will only inquire to what party the men belong, or what party recommends the measures, that is a state of things which is dangerous to the stability of a free government.

It has been said that party is the madness of many for the gain of the few. This is true, because of all inventions dangerous to liberty, of all inventions calculated to subvert free institutions and popular forms of government, of all inventions calculated to apply a bandage to the eyes of man, an unscrupulous, heated, undistinguishing spirit of party is the most effectual. I will ask you all to talk to your neighbors who propose to vote for Mr. Polk, on this point; to reason with them, to ask them the question, and you will find, when you come to bring them to it, that they purpose doing so because Mr. Polk is of their party, and Mr. Clay is of the other party. You will find, when you come to ask them, that many who propose to vote for Mr. Polk desire, nevertheless, to see all his policy defeated. Of this there is no doubt. Many of the leading men among our opponents, and many of those connected with the public press, have openly expressed themselves dissatisfied with the nomination. They have issued their manifestoes to that effect, and they advise the people to do what they intend to do themselves, that is, support Mr. Polk for the Presidency, but take especial care to support also as members of Congress, those men that will defeat his policy.

Now, I do not suppose that our free government could long be maintained by such a miserable, crooked policy as this. The plan of our opponents is to elect Mr. Polk to the office of chief-

magistrate of this country, and at the same time to give him, intentionally, and by design, a Congress that shall defeat his policy; to elect him to an office wherein he is to be the guardian of the whole people, an office that has been filled by Washington, and an office that we had hoped always to see filled by men of Washington's principles, if not of his ability, — to select and elect a man to fill this office, and then to put him under guardianship in order to defeat his measures!

The case is a serious one. It addresses itself to the conscience of every man, to see that he does not support in any way, as candidate for the Presidency, a man whose whole course of policy and opinions he is utterly opposed to. And it comes to this: Is there such a sense of the great duty which they owe to their fellow-men, to their children, and to generations yet unborn, such a sense of the necessity of preserving unimpaired the benefits and efficiency of our free, our noble institutions, such a sense of the deep responsibility that rests on them at this important crisis, such a sense of patriotism and integrity, that men will prefer their country to their party in the coming contest, or not? (Cries of "There is!" "There is!")

I believe it. And, to take the other hypothesis, if those who vote for Mr. Polk do not do it under the stimulus of party feeling, then it must be that they vote for him because they are opposed to Mr. Clay's principles. They may be supposed to say, "It is true that Mr. Clay is the most distinguished man, it is true that he has rendered infinitely more important services to his country than Mr. Polk, it is true that the country regards him with far more favor than his opponent, still his measures and principles, as he has avowed them, incline us to elect an inferior man, because we like the principles of the latter better, and believe that they will be more beneficial to the country." Very well. If that case be made out, then you and I, and all Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, are bound to take Mr. Polk. Because, if we suppose and believe that his principles and his measures will conform to our principles and our interests, and the interests of the country, and that Mr. Clay's principles and measures will not conform to our principles and our interests, and the interests of the country, then we are bound to take the second best.

And this leads us directly to the inquiry, What are the measures, principles, and opinions of the one and of the other, as sub-

mitted to the consideration and judgment of the people? Now, Gentlemen, there would be a stop to all republican government, a dead halt made by those who desire to see the prosperity of free institutions, if we were to give up this first great principle, that electors are inquisitive enough to desire to know the opinions and sentiments of those whom they may choose to rule over them, that they have intelligence enough thoroughly to analyze those opinions and those sentiments, and discretion and candor enough to make the proper application of the knowledge thus acquired. If this great principle be given up, then the substratum of popular government falls to the ground. I believe there is intelligence enough to do this, and integrity enough to choose those whose principles are best calculated to effect the great objects which we all have in view.

There are two leading questions for our consideration in the very important contest before us. One is the protective system. This subject has been so ably and thoroughly discussed before you by men much more able to do justice to it than I am, that it is not necessary I should dwell upon it here. It is a favorite measure with you, with us at home, and with all our party. We deem it a most necessary system, one that cannot under any circumstances be dispensed with, as being necessary to the comfort, necessary to the happiness, the prosperity of all; and vitally touching the permanent, as well as the present, interests of the community.

This brings us at once to the inquiry, What are the opinions which these two candidates hold upon this protective policy? and it leads us first to ask what are Mr. Polk's sentiments thereon.

This is easily answered. It is notorious, that, when Mr. Polk was nominated, it was partly on account of his hostility to the tariff of 1842. I had supposed that there was not a man in the Union, of information or intelligence, not a man who could read a newspaper, who did not fully understand, who did not know, who was not morally certain, that Mr. Polk was put forth as a strong, uncompromising anti-tariff man, a warm friend and advocate of free trade; and that he was nominated on those very grounds to run against Mr. Clay. The thing was not disguised with us. All his adherents in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine avowed that he was a strong anti-tariff man, and declared that on that very ground they would vote for

him. But in course of time his friends found that this doctrine was not popular in some parts of the Union, and they therefore resolved that he should go to them, not in his true, but in his assumed, garb; that he, who was the steady, regular, original enemy to protection, should be dressed and undressed, and undressed and dressed again, and finally exhibited in his new garments as a protectionist. I do not believe that Mr. Polk, after undergoing such a change, after donning his new, and for him unaccustomed garments, — I do not think that he would have that continuity of ideas which philosophers say constitutes "personal identity"; he would not know himself. Indeed, so far as I know any thing of Mr. Polk, I do not believe that he would submit to any such degradation. I do not believe that he would for a moment lend himself to the perpetration of such deception. I believe he would scorn it. If he were here to-day, and the question were to be put to him, to be sure he would look grave, and would not like to make any answer; but if he were forced to speak, under the penalty of forfeiting the good opinion of all men, he would say, directly and honestly, "I am opposed to protection; I came into public life opposed to it; all my votes, speeches, and public acts have been in direct hostility to it, my sentiments have undergone no change up to this hour in regard to it, and I expect to remain an uncompromising enemy to it, till the day I die."

This is strong language, but it is not stronger than Mr. Polk used in stating his views last year, in the general discussion and controversy with Mr. Jones, in Tennessee, when they were rival candidates for the office of Governor of that State. Tennessee had been a strong anti-tariff State; she had followed closely the lead of South Carolina on this subject. But the sentiments of the people had undergone a change; several of the most eminent men in the State thought that the tariff operated beneficially, even to Tennessee, and were satisfied that it benefited the whole country immensely, and with true patriotism abandoned all local prejudices, for the general welfare. Mr. Polk remained on the old anti-tariff ground. He proposed to Mr. Jones, that they should write letters to the people explaining their respective opinions, and fully discuss this great question in their approaching contest; and it is notorious that the contest was strictly tariff and anti-tariff, and that Mr. Polk came off second best.

That Mr. Polk ever has been, and still is, regarded as thoroughly opposed to all protection, is quite clear from the occurrences at the Baltimore Convention, where Mr. Polk was nominated and Mr. Van Buren defeated. Mr. Van Buren was not much of a tariff man, nor much of an anti-tariff man; he was not much of a proslavery man, nor much of an antislavery man, nor much of a decided man in any thing or on any question. He was not much for Texas, and he was not much against Texas. He was not against the tariff, nor pledged up to his chin for Texas. How did he fare? He had a majority of the votes in the convention, and was, therefore, put under the ban of the two-thirds rule. He could not get two thirds of the votes, and after a course of proceeding which it would not become me to characterize in appropriate terms here, he was defeated, and Mr. Polk was chosen, the thorough anti-tariff and pro-Texas man!

This is all true. It is not more true that the battles of Brandywine and Germantown were fought in 1777, and that Washington and his army were here in the winter of 1778, than that Mr. Polk was brought forward because he was anti-tariff. If it had not been for his opposition to the tariff and his advocacy of the annexation of Texas, we should never have heard any more of Mr. James K. Polk of Tennessee! And yet I have seen banners floating in the air, in this intelligent county of Chester, on which were inscribed, "POLK AND DALLAS, AND THE TARIFF OF 1842!"

Why, is there no shame in men? Mr. Polk openly avows that he is for reducing the duties on all imported goods to the level of the Compromise Act, as that law stood on the 29th of June, 1842. That is to say, to twenty per cent. on every thing. He says, "Down with the tariff!" And his friends here say, "Polk and the tariff for ever!" Is there no shame in men? Or do they suppose that they will be enabled to put such a veil of blindness over men's eyes, that, if the cry be right, that is, if it come from the right quarter, they will take the leap, lead where it may? If men could be misled by such means, if they could be deceived by such a miserable juggle as this, I should despair of the practicability of popular governments. If a man can thus stifle the voice of his conscience, if he can throw aside his integrity and patriotism, if he can forget the duty he owes to himself,

his family, his country, and his God, for such a shallow device as this, how can he be worthy of being a citizen of this free and happy country?

It becomes our duty, then, to expose, in every way and everywhere, this infamous juggle. Let us put it down, and put it down at once and for ever. Let us declare it a fraud and a cheat. I declare it a fraud and a cheat; and if my voice could be heard throughout the whole of this country, I would say that, whoever he is, if he be a man of common information and common knowledge, and comes to an elector of this or any other State, and says that Mr. Polk is in favor of the tariff, he means to cheat and defraud that elector out of the proper exercise of the elective franchise! And after he has got him to vote for Mr. Polk, he will turn his back on him and say, "What intolerable gulls *the people* are!"

If this were not so serious a matter, it would be supremely ridiculous. But it is so serious a thing as to excite our deepest indignation, that men should try to get the honest votes of an honest community for the support of men and of measures which they know that honest community do not desire. We owe it, therefore, as a duty to our neighbors, to go among them; to explain this whole matter to them; to read Mr. Polk's declarations to them, and to undeceive them. We owe it to them as a sacred duty. We owe it to them inasmuch as we are all embarked in the same bottom. If they go down, we shall go down with them; we cannot prosper if they are ruined. For reason, and philosophy, and experience, and common sense, all teach that one portion of the community cannot flourish at the expense of another portion. Let us by every exertion possible, by the use of calm, sober reasoning and fair argument, bring our neighbors who are of opposite opinions to ours to see things in their proper light, and to induce them to give their support to those who are their friends and the friends of that policy which they desire themselves to see perpetuated.

I shall not go at great length into a discussion of the tariff. It is well understood in this part of the country. There would not be the slightest doubt in my mind of the result of the coming election in Pennsylvania, if the people could be made to understand what the issue really is. The tariff policy is founded

on this. We have vast resources of natural wealth; by these, if properly protected, and, as a natural consequence, properly and fully developed, we have the means of providing other vast sources of wealth, which will contribute, not to the emolument of a few, as has been falsely asserted, but to the prosperity and lasting happiness of every class in the community. We are in a situation that does not require us all to be farmers, or all lawyers, or all mechanics. There must necessarily be another class, that of manufacturers and operatives. And a system which shall create a demand for labor, which shall amply remunerate that labor, which shall thereby create such a wholesome demand for agricultural products, as to properly compensate the tiller of the ground for his toil, — a system which would enable the farmers to raise up their families (those families which are the main pride and boast of the country) in comfort and happiness, and thus to benefit and preserve all that is dear to them in the world, — such a system ought to be pursued, and no other.

I am addressing here, I suppose, an assembly, a large majority of whom are engaged in agricultural pursuits. And I put it to the farmer to say how the tariff affects him. There are many false prophets going to and fro in the land, who declare that the tariff benefits only the manufacturer, and that it injures the farmer. This is all sheer misrepresentation.

Every farmer must see, that it is his interest to find a near purchaser for his produce, to find a ready purchaser, and a purchaser at a good price. Now, the tariff supposes, that, if there be domestic manufactures carried on successfully, there will inevitably be those engaged therein who will consume a large amount of agricultural products, because they do not raise any for themselves, — a new class of consumers of the farmer's commodities, an enlarged class of consumers. Now if that general rule be false, then our policy is false. But if that general rule be true, then our policy is true. If it be for the interest of the Chester farmer, that there should be many consumers, that the number should be largely increased of those who do not raise agricultural products, then our policy is true; and if it be not for the interest, but for the injury, of the Chester farmer, that the number of those who consume but do not raise agricultural products should be increased, then our policy is false.

To illustrate this, I will here give an estimate that has been

made with very great care, by a most intelligent writer, a friend of mine, in whose judgment I have the highest confidence. This estimate shows the exact state of things in this country, in connection with the subjects before us. And, before I go into it, allow me to say that the great wealth, the great happiness, of the country consists in the interchange of domestic commodities.

In illustrating this point, let us take the article of bread-stuffs. What do you do with it? Who consumes it? What becomes of it? You send your flour to Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore; but where does it go to from those places? There must be an ultimate consumer. There must be a last man into whose hands the barrel of flour must go before the hoops are knocked off. And where is he to be found? Why, the chief consumption of wheat flour in this country is in the East, where the great manufacturing interests are carried on; and in the districts where large and extensive mining operations are successfully making progress; and in those other districts inhabited by the workers in wool, and workers in cotton, and workers in iron and the various metals. These are the classes who are the great and profitable consumers of the farmer's produce, whilst they never compete with him in raising it.

The amount of cotton imported into New England is very large, but the amount of bread-stuffs imported is still larger. But here is the extract before referred to: —

"Bread-stuffs are a more valuable import into New England than cotton. Of flour (wheat) we do not raise, in Massachusetts, over 120,000 bushels of wheat, equal to 24,000 barrels of flour, — about enough for the Lowell operatives. The balance comes from States out of New England. I should say we consumed, at least, 600,000 barrels of imported wheat flour, and a large amount of maize, rye, and oats. Maine may raise one half its wheat, but imports a large quantity of maize, oats, and rye, and New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island import still more. Of sugar, we do not take any great quantity of Louisiana. It goes more to the Middle, but chiefly to the Western States. Of tobacco, we are, in New England, large consumers; and our ships to Africa and the East find a market for large quantities, in small parcels. Of naval stores, we, of course, consume immensely; for in Massachusetts we have 550,000 tons of shipping, and in Maine about 350,000 more; and in New England, in the whole, about 1,050,000. We distil a large quantity of turpentine for exportation to all parts of the world.

"There is no population except that of London which has a greater consuming ability for the necessaries, comforts, and most of the luxuries of life, than the 800,000 people of Massachusetts; consequently, there is no population so advantageous to trade with. The Middle, and Southern, and Western States have laid great stress on the Zollverein treaty on account of reductions in duties, which would not augment the sales of tobacco, cotton, &c., to the extent of five hundred thousand dollars. Now, the commerce which those sections have with Massachusetts, — which Mr. McDuffie ranks as one of the *poor States*, because we have but few exports for foreign countries, — I say, the commerce which these sections, namely, the South, and West, and Middle States, have with Massachusetts, is of more value, and of greater magnitude, than all the products which those sections sell to the *whole population of Germany;* and, I will add, to Russia, Sweden, and Denmark.

"What may be the amount of imports into Massachusetts from these sections, I cannot ascertain; but of grain of all kinds, it cannot be less, at average prices of the past five years, than $7,000,000; of cotton, 180,000 bales at $35 per bale, average of five years, $6,300,000; making $13,300,000 for those two staples. On reference to the returns of 1842, the last published, I find the domestic exports to the countries referred to as follows: —

Hanse Towns,	$3,814,994
Russia,	316,026
Prussia,	149,141
Sweden, and Swedish West Indies,	368,675
Denmark, and the Danish West Indies,	862,594
	$5,511,430
Add, to Trieste,	748,179
	$6,259,609

"Commercially speaking, if this portion of the European population, amounting to at least 120,000,000, were to suspend their intercourse with the United States, it would be less detrimental to the States out of New England, than a cessation of intercourse with the poor State, as she is termed by many Southern men, of Massachusetts, with her population of 800,000 (last census 737,000), and increasing, in spite of the great density of her population, at the rate of about 18 per cent. in ten years.

"As to the other five New England States, I suppose the aggregate of their transactions with States out of New England may not equal the amount of the transactions of Massachusetts. This difference results from the nature of our products, and the superior amount of our capital,

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which, *per capita*, is greater than exists in any other State, and four times as great as in a majority of the States. Of course, such estimates are in some measure conjectural, but they are partly based on facts which are before the country.

"There never was a traffic carried on in any country, more advantageous, from its magnitude and its character, than the interchange of products between New England and the other States. We are large consumers. We *pay cash* for all we buy, and in good money, while we sell on credit, and have lost by bad debts south of the Hudson, within twenty years, more wealth than some of the cotton States, who call us poor, are now possessed of."

Now, the question is, Does not this show the true policy of the country to be, to build up interests that shall contribute to the healthy employment and mutual happiness of each other, and thus benefit equally the whole community? And with this, knowing, as I do, that the whole sentiments of the people of Pennsylvania are in favor of the protective system, I leave the topic.

Now, there is another and a very important subject that I desire briefly to speak of. We are trying the great experiment of the success of popular government, — whether these seventeen millions of people will exercise so much intelligence, integrity, virtue, and patriotism, as shall secure to this great country for ever the blessings of a free, enlightened, liberal, and popular government. In the first place, we have laid at its base a Constitution, — I had almost said, and may say, a miraculous Constitution when we take into view all the circumstances connected with its origin and maturity, — a Constitution unequalled in its scope and design, its construction and its effect, which secures the full enjoyment of all human rights alike to every one. We are bound by a solemn duty to see that, among the candidates for the high offices in the gift of a free people, we give our votes to such as venerate that Constitution, and to none other. The principles of our government are liberty and equality, established law and order, security for public liberty and private right, a general system of education liberally diffused, the free exercise of every religious creed and opinion, and brotherly love and harmony, this last being considered peculiarly the characteristic of a happy people under a free form of government. It is to preserve all these, to see that not one of these rights and privileges is soiled in passing

through the hands appointed to administer them, that not one is weakened, none injured or destroyed, that we are called upon to exercise our judgment and our privileges at the ensuing election. All these call on us with a sense of deep responsibility, whenever it is our duty to give our suffrages to the candidates for the high offices of our respective States and common country.

Now the subject for your serious consideration at this time is the annexation of another large territory to the twenty-six States we already possess. I have seen the dismemberment of Texas from Mexico with much hope. She sprung into existence of a sudden, perhaps prematurely, but she seemed competent to sustain herself in her position; and you and I and all wished her well, for we wished to see the advancement of human liberty. Men who set up a government after the plan of our own, and sincerely take our Washington for their model, are always entitled to our regard. But, whatever may be our feelings and desires in relation to Texas, we must not take such a vast extent of territory into our Union without looking a little into the internal condition of things there, and to the institutions of that country. And it has always appeared to me that the slavery of the blacks, and the unavoidable increase both of the numbers of these slaves and of the duration of their slavery, formed an insuperable objection to its annexation. For I will do nothing, now or at any time, that shall tend to extend the slavery of the African race on this continent. Now, our opponents are in favor of immediate annexation, at all hazards! The Secretary of State says, in the correspondence transmitted with the treaty to the Senate of the United States, that the United States are ready to take all the responsibility of annexing it immediately; because, he says, the annexation of Texas is necessary to preserve the domestic institutions of the two countries, — that is, to preserve slavery in the United States, and to preserve slavery in Texas. To secure these objects, the United States will take all the responsibility.

Now slavery, in this country, stands where the Constitution left it. I have taken an oath to support the Constitution, and I mean to abide by it. I shall do nothing to carry the power of the general government within the just bounds of the States. I shall do nothing to interfere with the domestic institutions of the South; and the government of the United States have no

right to interfere therewith. But that is a different thing, very, from not interfering to prevent the extension of slavery, by adding a large slave country to this. Why, where would this lead us to? Some day, England may become deeply involved in domestic difficulties, and the people of the North may want the annexation of Canada. We have territory enough, we are happy enough, each State moulds its own institutions to suit its own people, and is it not best to leave them alone?

Others will address you on other topics, and I must take my leave. I came among you only to tell you the deep interest I feel in your ensuing State election. The election of a President of the United States depends on the next gubernatorial election of Pennsylvania, or at least may be materially affected by it. As far as we can go for the maintenance of our Constitution and our rights, we of Massachusetts intend to do our duty, and we believe that you will do yours.

A feeling of delicacy will restrain me from attempting to advise you in aught that concerns your State election. A letter has been read from Governor Ritner, showing the important bearing of the election for Governor, in this State, upon the next November contest, and I concur in every word of that letter. I know there is nothing in the North which interests all so much, there is nothing to which a man so quickly and intently turns his thoughts, after the performance of his daily devotional duties, as to inquire into the prospects of your next ensuing election. For it will be ominous of the contest next November. It stands to reason, that, where eight hundred thousand votes are cast, any party decidedly beaten in October will require very great exertion to rouse itself a second time. And it is therefore from the election of next week that I shall deduce my conclusions whether Pennsylvania next November will stand side by side with Massachusetts, or not.

One word more, though I do not intend to canvass the merits of the respective candidates. I may be allowed to say that I had, a few days ago, the honor and pleasure of making the acquaintance of General Markle; and whether he be elected Governor of this Commonwealth or not, or whatever may betide him or me in after life, I am very glad to know him. He is a frank, open-hearted, intelligent, and noble citizen. And if I were a Pennsylvanian, as you are Pennsylvanians, there is no

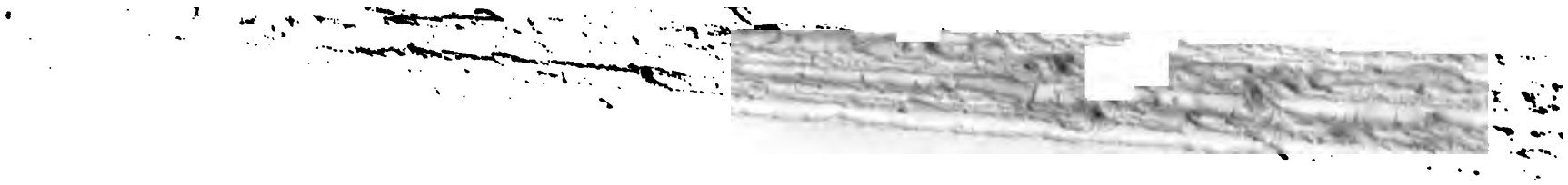
man in the Commonwealth to whom I would sooner give my vote, or with whom I would sooner intrust the destinies of my State. And I pray Heaven, that at the next election you will all do your duty.

The duties before us must be regarded as serious and sober; the times are serious and sober; the occasion is serious and sober. The result of the next election will give a tone to the government and to the whole country for many years to come. It will decide whether the government is to remain upon the track which it has pursued since the days of Washington, or whether we are to shoot athwart the sky, and go off into some unknown region of political darkness.

There is no man who possesses so much or so little power, no man so elevated or so humble, as to be excused from exerting all the power he possesses to bring about the desired result; because there is no man so high in station or prosperity, no man so secure in life, or the possession of this world's goods, no man so intrenched in every way, and so persuaded that he is proof against fortune or fate, as not to be in danger from the effects of that disastrous course of policy which will be pursued should our adversaries succeed at the election.

Nor is there a man so low, so much bound to daily toil, as not to have an interest in the principles which the Whigs avow, those principles which reward labor, those principles which will elevate him in society, which shall fill his mouth with bread, his home with happiness, his heart with gladness.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for the honor and kindness of your patient attention, and respectfully bid you farewell.



Mr. Justice Story

Mr. Justice Story*

At a meeting of the Suffolk Bar, held in the Circuit Court Room, Boston, on the morning of the 12th of September, the day of the funeral of Mr. Justice Story, Chief Justice Shaw having taken the chair and announced the object of the meeting, Mr. Webster rose and spoke substantially as follows: —

Your solemn announcement, Mr. Chief Justice, has confirmed the sad intelligence which had already reached us, through the public channels of information, and deeply afflicted us all.

Joseph Story, one of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, and for many years the presiding judge of this Circuit, died on Wednesday evening last, at his house in Cambridge, wanting only a few days for the completion of the sixty-sixth year of his age.

This most mournful and lamentable event has called together the whole Bar of Suffolk, and all connected with the courts of law or the profession. It has brought you, Mr. Chief Justice, and your associates of the Bench of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, into the midst of us; and you have done us the

* The following letter of dedication to the mother of Judge Story accompanied these remarks in the original edition: —

"*Boston, September* 15, 1845.

"Venerable Madam, — I pray you to allow me to present to you the brief remarks which I made before the Suffolk Bar, on the 12th instant, at a meeting occasioned by the sudden and afflicting death of your distinguished son. I trust, dear Madam, that as you enjoyed through his whole life constant proofs of his profound respect and ardent filial affection, so you may yet live long to enjoy the remembrance of his virtues and his exalted reputation.

"I am, with very great regard, your obedient servant,

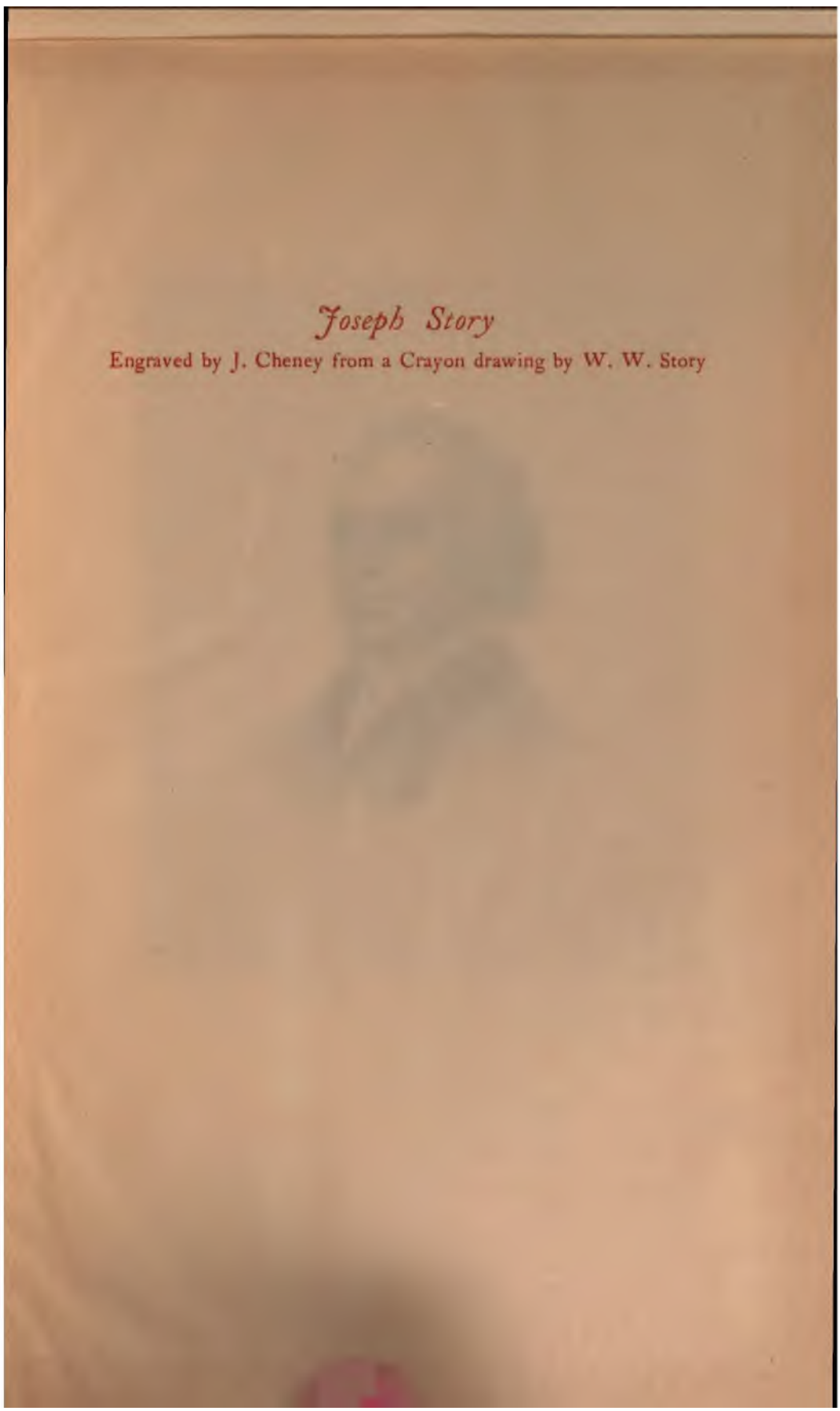
"Daniel Webster.

"To Madam Story."

honor, out of respect to the occasion, to consent to preside over us, while we deliberate on what is due, as well to our own afflicted and smitten feelings, as to the exalted character and eminent distinction of the deceased judge. The occasion has drawn from his retirement, also, that venerable man, whom we all so much respect and honor, (Judge Davis,) who was, for thirty years, the associate of the deceased upon the same Bench. It has called hither another judicial personage, now in retirement, (Judge Putnam,) but long an ornament of that Bench of which you are now the head, and whose marked good fortune it is to have been the professional teacher of Mr. Justice Story, and the director of his early studies. He also is present to whom this blow comes near; I mean, the learned judge (Judge Sprague) from whose side it has struck away a friend and a highly venerated official associate. The members of the Law School at Cambridge, to which the deceased was so much attached, and who returned that attachment with all the ingenuousness and enthusiasm of educated and ardent youthful minds, are here also, to manifest their sense of their own severe deprivation, as well as their admiration of the bright and shining professional example which they have so loved to contemplate, — an example, let me say to them, and let me say to all, as a solace in the midst of their sorrows, which death hath not touched and which time cannot obscure.

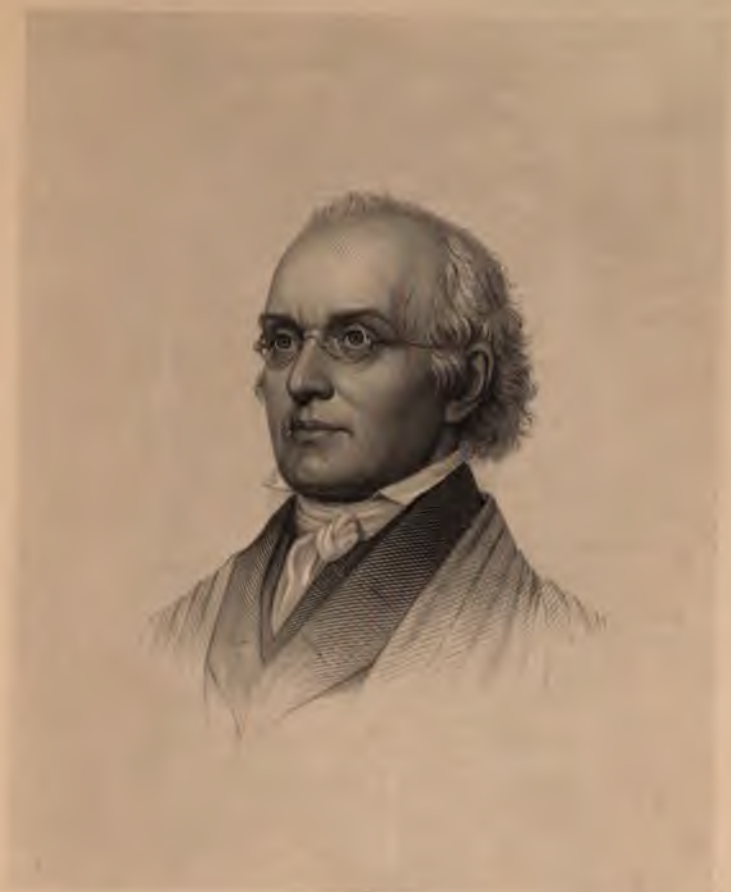
Mr. Chief Justice, one sentiment pervades us all. It is that of the most profound and penetrating grief, mixed, nevertheless, with an assured conviction, that the great man whom we deplore is yet with us and in the midst of us. He hath not wholly died. He lives in the affections of friends and kindred, and in the high regard of the community. He lives in our remembrance of his social virtues, his warm and steady friendships, and the vivacity and richness of his conversation. He lives, and will live still more permanently, by his words of written wisdom, by the results of his vast researches and attainments, by his imperishable legal judgments, and by those juridical disquisitions which have stamped his name, all over the civilized world, with the character of a commanding authority. "Vivit, enim, vivetque semper; atque etiam latius in memoria hominum et sermone versabitur, postquam ab oculis recessit."

Mr. Chief Justice, there are consolations which arise to miti-



Joseph Story

Engraved by J. Cheney from a Crayon drawing by W. W. Story



gate our loss, and shed the influence of resignation over unfeigned and heartfelt sorrow. We are all penetrated with gratitude to God that the deceased lived so long: that he did so much for himself, his friends, the country, and the world: that his lamp went out, at last, without unsteadiness or flickering. He continued to exercise every power of his mind without dimness or obscuration, and every affection of his heart with no abatement of energy or warmth, till death drew an impenetrable veil between us and him. Indeed, he seems to us now, as in truth he is, not extinguished or ceasing to be, but only withdrawn; as the clear sun goes down at its setting, not darkened but only no longer seen.

This calamity, Mr. Chief Justice, is not confined to the bar or the courts of this Commonwealth. It will be felt by every bar throughout the land, by every court, and indeed by every intelligent and well-informed man in or out of the profession. It will be felt still more widely, for his reputation had a still wider range. In the High Court of Parliament, in every tribunal in Westminster Hall, in the judicatories of Paris and Berlin, of Stockholm and St. Petersburg, in the learned universities of Germany, Italy, and Spain, by every eminent jurist in the civilized world, it will be acknowledged that a great luminary has fallen from the firmament of public jurisprudence.

Sir, there is no purer pride of country than that in which we may indulge when we see America paying back the great debt of civilization, learning, and science to Europe. In this high return of light for light and mind for mind, in this august reckoning and accounting between the intellects of nations, Joseph Story was destined by Providence to act, and did act, an important part. Acknowledging, as we all acknowledge, our obligations to the original sources of English law, as well as of civil liberty, we have seen in our generation copious and salutary streams turning and running backward, replenishing their original fountains, and giving a fresher and a brighter green to the fields of English jurisprudence. By a sort of reversed hereditary transmission, the mother, without envy or cumulation, acknowledges that she has received a valuable and cherished inheritance from the daughter. The profession in England admits, with frankness and candor, and with no feeling but that of respect and admiration, that he whose voice we have so re-

cently heard within these walls, but shall now hear no more was, of all men who have yet appeared, most fitted by the comprehensiveness of his mind, and the vast extent and accuracy of his attainments, to compare the codes of nations, to trace their differences to difference of origin, climate, or religious or political institutions, and to exhibit, nevertheless, their concurrence in those great principles upon which the system of human civilization rests.

Justice, Sir, is the great interest of man on earth. It is the ligament which holds civilized beings and civilized nations together. Wherever her temple stands, and so long as it is duly honored, there is a foundation for social security, general happiness, and the improvement and progress of our race. And whoever labors on this edifice with usefulness and distinction, whoever clears its foundations, strengthens its pillars, adorns its entablatures, or contributes to raise its august dome still higher in the skies, connects himself, in name, and fame, and character, with that which is and must be as durable as the frame of human society.

All know, Mr. Chief Justice, the pure love of country which animated the deceased, and the zeal, as well as the talent, with which he explained and defended her institutions. His work on the Constitution of the United States is one of his most eminently successful labors. But all his writings, and all his judgments, all his opinions, and the whole influence of his character, public and private, leaned strongly and always to the support of sound principles, to the restraint of illegal power, and to the discouragement and rebuke of licentious and disorganizing sentiments. "Ad rempublicam firmandam, et ad stabiliendas vires, et sanandum populum, omnis ejus pergebat institutio."

But this is not the occasion, Sir, nor is it for me to consider and discuss at length the character and merits of Mr. Justice Story, as a writer or a judge. The performance of that duty, with which this Bar will no doubt charge itself, must be deferred to another opportunity, and will be committed to abler hands. But in the homage paid to his memory, one part may come with peculiar propriety and emphasis from ourselves. We have known him in private life. We have seen him descend from the bench, and mingle in our friendly circles. We have

known his manner of life, from his youth up. We can bear witness to the strict uprightness and purity of his character, his simplicity and unostentatious habits, the ease and affability of his intercourse, his remarkable vivacity amidst severe labors, the cheerful and animating tones of his conversation, and his fast fidelity to friends. Some of us, also, can testify to his large and liberal charities, not ostentatious or casual, but systematic and silent, — dispensed almost without showing the hand, and falling and distilling comfort and happiness, like the dews of heaven. But we can testify, also, that in all his pursuits and employments, in all his recreations, in all his commerce with the world, and in his intercourse with the circle of his friends, the predominance of his judicial character was manifest. He never forgot the ermine which he wore. The judge, the judge, the useful and distinguished judge, was the great picture which he kept constantly before his eyes, and to a resemblance of which all his efforts, all his thoughts, all his life, were devoted. We may go the world over, without finding a man who shall present a more striking realization of the beautiful conception of D'Aguesseau: "C'est en vain que l'on cherche à distinguer en lui la personne privée et la personne publique; un même esprit les anime, un même objet les réunit; l'homme, le père de famille, le citoyen, tout est en lui consacré à la gloire du magistrat."

Mr. Chief Justice, one may live as a conqueror, a king, or a magistrate; but he must die as a man. The bed of death brings every human being to his pure individuality; to the intense contemplation of that deepest and most solemn of all relations, the relation between the creature and his Creator. Here it is that fame and renown cannot assist us; that all external things must fail to aid us; that even friends, affection, and human love and devotedness, cannot succor us. This relation, the true foundation of all duty, a relation perceived and felt by conscience and confirmed by revelation, our illustrious friend, now deceased, always acknowledged. He reverenced the Scriptures of truth, honored the pure morality which they teach, and clung to the hopes of future life which they impart. He beheld enough in nature, in himself, and in all that can be known of things seen, to feel assured that there is a Supreme

Power, without whose providence not a sparrow falleth to the ground. To this gracious being he trusted himself for time and for eternity; and the last words of his lips ever heard by mortal ears were a fervent supplication to his Maker to take him to himself.

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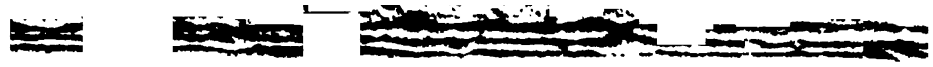

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